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Interpretation of cultural disparities experienced in cross-cultural interaction in South Korean culture - from a Hungarian perspective

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Ph.D. thesis

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"... upon arrival, I expected something totally different. And it was not that different.

You are just beginning to live in it [the culture], and then it starts to be like those frustrating dreams, everything is like in reality, but when you do something, the outcome is still different in some way than you would expect." [1]

1 INTRODUCTION

International (economic) activity has been spreading across cultures and borders. Getting in touch with members of other cultures online or personally has become part of the everyday life of people working to achieve their personal or corporate goals[2]. Hocking et al. (2004) formulated three general goals acting as drivers of the intercultural flow of labour. To spread business applications, to realize corporate goals and to let the individual gain more experience and knowledge -- all of which are achieved best in an international environment.

These cases are similar in that the individuals concerned move far away from the place and consequently the customs and rules that are most familiar to them. Getting to know and understand the new environment, new rules and new behavioural patterns is a major undertaking for the individual who is undergoing the process. Differences in approach and value hierarchy and also conflicts and communication problems may be encountered when members of two cultures meet. Difficulties of understanding and integration and unusual events in the new environment may leave their mark on the individual that he must process, understand, accept and deliberately address as part of his personal learning process that is indispensable for spending a longer time in the alien culture. As Topcu (2005) describes, when individuals join a foreign culture as outsiders, they may have the impression that the new culture is not sufficiently contact-oriented and human/friendly relationships are much more restrained.

Individual experiences vary due to the differences of the countries, but encounters and integration at the workplace and in private life in the new medium generate similar

[1] Excerpt from an interviewee on what it was like to be a Hungarian in South Korean culture.
[2] Naturally, there are certain people who get in touch with another culture or move to an alien place, but not out of their own free will (e.g. refugees). This lies beyond the scope of my thesis; therefore, my statements will refer to people who travel and live in other cultures out of their own free will.

feelings. There are also differences in the strongest factors hindering integration such as the attitude/actions of the sender/host workplace organisation, administrative/official issues, family relationships (or lack of those), eating and drinking habits or the everyday customs of the new medium. Obviously, workers posted by their home organisation have a kind of safety net provided by the structure, processes and culture of the sender organisation. Individual expatriates, on the other hand, may experience more stress due to relocation and the cultural shock caused by the new environment.

We know from the research of Azevedo (2011) that however smoothly the members of two very different cultures cooperate, the individuals concerned will always be affected by such encounters.

The world has opened up, but it has also become more restricted. Since people meet alien cultures every day, the relevant effects, whether individual (value clashes, communication problems, individual learning) or organisational (treatment of diversity, organizational learning, multi-cultural environment), represent a topical and important field of research.

I have always found such encounters and also integration into new cultures interesting, in particular since some cultures seem to mutually attract each other and seem instantly familiar to the member of the other culture, whereas others seem to repel each other and their members find closer contact inconceivable.

The first time I got in closer contact with Korean[3] culture was a few years ago and, undeniably, I was deeply touched and pulled by the cultural specifics and way of thinking there. When I realised that, the researcher in me considered this pull effect, impacting also on members of other cultures getting to know the Korean one, magical. I was eager to understand why Hungarians feel so at home in South Korea. Geographically, these are two very distant cultures, with radically different histories, values and traditions; nevertheless, their members can relate to each other.

To return to my research: I asked members of Hungarian culture about their experiences of Korean culture and their reflections on the same. My ultimate decision to research this topic was due to a personal experience. I was a guest at a seminar at Hankok

[3] My thesis is about the Republic of Korea or South Korea as it is commonly called (hangul: 대한민국, Tehan Minguk), so the term “Korea” will always refer to that country. North Korea will be referred to several times, but I will always make it clear that I speak of the state lying on the northern part of the Korean peninsula by indicating its being in the North.

University, Korea, and after the presentation students could ask me questions freely in connection with what had been said. I found it most interesting that, instead of asking professional questions, they raised the two key issues of interest to them. How old I was and whether I was married. I found this informal or maybe we could even say non-professional approach highly surprising. This personal experience has greatly influenced my choice of topic. I was highly surprised by this unexpected situation, and I assumed that other Hungarians would also have a lot to say about their encounters with South Korean culture.

1.1 RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This isolated country referred to as hermit kingdom in the 19th century became known through the 1988 Seoul Summer Olympics. According to the calculations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Korean economy contributed 1.6% of the global economy at purchasing power parity in 2016 and ranked 14th among the national economies globally and 5th in Asia (Statisztikai tükör, 2018).

Hungary has long been treated with special attention politically and also socially by the Republic of Korea as the first socialist country with which they had established diplomatic relations at the end of the 1980s. The diplomatic and economic relations of the two countries have developed at a fast pace after the systems change, and South Korea became a key Asian business partner of Hungary. South Korean FDI to Hungary has been rising since 2010, to EUR1.4 billion at end-2016. This makes the Republic of Korea one of the biggest non-EU investors to Hungary. At the end of 2016, direct investment from Hungary to the Asian country totalled EUR453 million, and at the end of 2015 there were 59 subsidiaries managed from the Republic of Korea in Hungary (Statisztikai tükör, 2018).

Besides building economic relations, South Korea applies a modern method of interest assertion: soft power. Soft power is a persuasive influencing/power technique when two cultures meet, that impacts on their communication and their dialogue and encounters. According to the concept, those in power can influence the preferences of others; in this sense, no coercive measures, i.e. hard power, need to be used (Nye, 2013). One of the main capabilities of soft power is that it utilises sympathy to attain its goals;

sympathy and attraction often lead to unconditional surrender/consent. Nye (2013) considers culture one of the sources of "soft power".

Ernst & Young (2012) defined three main soft power variables that can be used to gauge and rank the influence of a country. (1) The image of global culture is used to measure the given country's popularity in the global environment. (2) Global integrity measures the country's adherence to the internationally acknowledged ethic and moral norms and, finally, (3) global integration measures the international activity of a country[4]. The size of the GDP and the number of native speakers of the language of the culture exert a significant distorting effect on the ranking and strongly favour the Anglo-Saxon nations. Nevertheless, South Korea became the 3rd most influential country globally in the category of enterprise in 2017, and finished 13th in terms of cultural impact (https://softpower30.com).

Korea Trade Promotion Organization (KOTRA) as commercial representation of the Korean Embassy to Hungary is a non-profit entity registered in Budapest, dedicated to promoting commercial relations and investments between the Hungarian and the Korean parties. In addition to supporting theeconomic relations of the two countries, South Korea also applies soft power most forcefully to transfer the culture, language and habits of the country and hence enhance its influence. One example of its penetration is the Korean Cultural Centre (KCC) in Budapest that has organised various cultural events since its opening in February 2012 to connect South Korea and Hungary.

Studying the literature and the empirical aspects of the discrepancies of Hungarian and South Korean culture is a topical research goal, and the relevant research findings will fill a gap. The development and management system of South Korean economy has been analysed comprehensively by only two authors in Hungary (Mayer, 1994, Marosi, 1995). The relevant technical literature mostly contrasts Korean culture with that of Western Europe; the (defective) Korean/Hungarian data are missing. Hopefully, the research findings described in this thesis will be of help also to the actors of Korean/Hungarian business relations. They will help Hungarians develop their business relations with Korean partners and avoid any misunderstanding and conflict in their

[4] The following variables are used for the metrics: (1) Global image: TIME 100 index, Media export index, Corporate favorite index, Olympic index, US Linguistic index. (2) Global integrity: Freedom index, Voter turnout index, Rule of Law index, Carbon Dioxide Emission Index. (3) Global integration: Immigration Index, Tourism Index, English Fluency Index, University ranking index.

business dealings. Moreover, they will help Hungarian workers employed by Korean organisations better understand the culture, way of thinking and motives of Korean colleagues, managers and organisations.

1.2 RESEARCH GOAL

The general goal of the research is to examine the encounters of members of Hungarian and South Korean culture. Another goal is to ask research questions, taking into account the researcher's ideas formulated here as research assumptions, that would promote this exploratory research aiming at a deeper understanding of the status quo. A qualitative, exploratory method is applied to explore and explain cross-cultural discrepancies; that is, the research does not want to confirm or deny any quantitative research hypotheses.

Its main goal is to explore the differences in the way of thinking and interpretation patterns of members of Hungarian culture, presumably of cultural origin, based on their actual interaction with members of South Korean culture. Research is conducted at the level of the individual, so it examines reality as perceived locally, but the level of the conclusions is distanced from that of the individual. This research uses the emic approach; it explains the general by using local concepts, so it draws conclusions at the national level (of Hungarian and South-Korean culture), because it accepts that the members of the two cultures related their interpretations to their respective national (cultural) categories (Chevrier, 2009). It aims to explore and explain cultural discrepancies as seen by Hungarians, manifesting themselves through actions of members of South Korean culture, in order to enhance the efficiency of cooperation between these two cultures.

Further research goals include understanding how the interviewees interpret the cultural discrepancies in the interactions they experienced and what factors and values they attribute them to. Moreover, exploring through the retrospective analysis of the narrative interviews what the interviewees had learned from their South Korean interactions in their own interpretation, and how these revelations affect their cooperation with South Koreans in the present and the future. Furthermore, the research studies how the identified cultural differences can be applied for the sake of more efficient cooperation by employees coming from the two cultures.

In order to interpret the discrepancies arising when representatives of Hungarian and Korean culture meet, I had to examine the interpretational frameworks of culture, the cultural levels where such encounters take place and the potential reasons for the discrepancies.

I assumed that "Culture is the complex of those transmitted value patterns, notions and other symbol systems which affect the behaviour" (Kluckhohn, 1951) and that culture can be observed through patterns of behaviour considered self-evident by its members. Such behaviour patterns become clearly visible when an outsider driven by different cultural norms enters the cultural community (Hall, 1960). Of the levels of culture (Schein, 1985, Hofstede, 1991, Thomas, 2003) I chose the national one, assuming that members of culture often link their interpretations to national (cultural) categories, and certain consistent patterns are bound to recur when members of a culture speak of the culture of the country (Chevrier, 2009). This research wants to detect the beliefs, basic assumptions, socially embedded patterns in the context of the static approach to culture that do not change or change but slowly over time. Culture as I interpret it is thus a static phenomenon present in its members roughly unchanged in time Allarie and Firsirotu (1984). Cultural research applying the static approach typically defines a certain culture by the frontiers of the corresponding national culture; therefore, the limits of my research will be the borders of South Korea.

Intercultural cultural research can identify cultural differences through intercultural interaction (Hatch és Yanow, 2003). In my research, I look on the meeting of individuals from different cultures as a source of conflict; in the interactions concerned, values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviour patterns are reinterpreted and a common value and thought system evolves (Barinaga, 1998).

The main pillar of value researches is the realisation that the values people adhere to are the basic determinants of human behaviour (Ságvári, 2006), that is, value-driven action can serve as the basis of the research. Action theoretical cultural research, on the other hand, focuses on action as a special analytical unit and interprets it as behavior put in context, referring not only to the person of the actor, but also to its purpose and the underlying intention (Berry et al., 1992). I will present my reflections on the value-based and action theoretical cultural researches presented in the theoretical section at the end of the thesis, when I compare my research findings and the previous results of cultural

research. I will examine to what extent the outcomes of this research enrich the theories described so far in the literature.

Intercultural psychology examines human behaviour and experiencing, and its effects. Typically, in the situations under study people from different cultures interact and the investigation focuses on the culture-specific effects of psychologically relevant processes impacting on behaviour, such as information processing, perception, evaluation, decision-making and emotions. The main feature of intercultural situations is that their participants are persons socialised in different cultures, so their acts are determined by the values and norms that are typical of their culture, but unknown to the other party. This leads to a complex situation (Thomas, 1996). The above explains why I considered it relevant for the interviewees of the research to cover in their stories the stress and maybe cultural shock factors they had experienced.

2 THEORETICAL OUTLOOK

2.1 CULTURE

The following chapter reviews the technical literature on the subject. I found it essential to introduce certain basic concepts and contexts to make the results and conclusions of the research easier to understand. The literature on cultural research is abundant and variegated. I tried to carry out the review of the literature in a focused and straightforward way, to arrive at a concise and comprehensive overview, starting from the basics and defining the place of the present research in the current landscape of cultural researches. The present chapter details attempts to define culture going back practically to its birth, then introduces its levels and elements and possible interpretations. After that, it describes the methodologies of cultural research and takes a deeper look at them based on a certain classification logic (value-based vs. action theoretical ones). Each section ends with a presentation of my researcher choices of relevance for the research.

2.1.1 Definitions of culture

The concept of culture is a central category of human thinking and as such it is approached and interpreted in many ways, and it is often used as an all-inclusive, uncertain construct of unspecified meaning (Alvesson, 2000). The concept itself has been changing throughout the history of human thinking; culture is not a static phenomenon: the development level of a given society, its structure, relation to reality and the continuous changes of all these factors influence the culture ever of mankind in terms of both space and time.

Culture itself is a complex concept that has no commonly accepted definition. According to Geertz (2001), when we are trying to explain culture, while looking for certainties we are likely to generate even more uncertainty. Williams (2001) considers culture a concept coexisting with history and, therefore, approaches it as a socially determined method for describing our life rather than a scientific concept. According to Demorgon and Molz (1996), experiments to define culture should not ignore the fact that they are products of culture themselves. It is impossible to have a uniformly accepted definition of culture, as its interpretation is influenced by such factors as research

objectives and methods and the form and method of interpretation of the results (Márkus, 1992, Demorgon-Molz, 1996).

The word derives from the Latin verb ‘colere’ meaning ‘cultivate, nurture, care, till the ground’ (Kondor, 2003). The concept defined in Antiquity was revived by Italian humanists in the 15th century, and it has slowly made its way to the various national languages of Western Europe. By the beginning of the 17th century, expressions like “cultura mentis”, “cultura ingenii” and their equivalents had become so widely accepted in certain national languages (cf. “culture of mind” in English) that Francis Bacon (1623) e.g. already constructed a secondary metaphor on the altered original meaning in “De Dignitate et Augmentis Scientiarum”. Referring to “Georgica”, the famous didactic poem on rural life and farming by Publius Vergilius Maro (around 37-29 BC), Bacon calls “georgica animi” that part of ethics that deals with the principles and methods of moral education as cultivation of the soul (“cultura animi”). He uses the word “cultura” in another part of the poem without designating the object (i.e. the mind) that is being cultivated. This is proof that public opinion had already associated “cultura” with cultivating the mind - in the sense of education and self-education -, whereas previously it had typically been used only metaphorically. The first signs of differentiation between the cultured and the uncultured, referring initially to differences of origin, appeared in the 18th century. This is confirmed by the change at the beginning of the 19th century when social origin was defined by the contemporary elite by emphasizing erudition, culture (person of culture), rather than ancestry. This was concurrent, understandably, with the division of society into educated and uneducated people; concurrently, the demand appeared for extended and free education. Further changes in meaning occurred in the 1770-80s. Instead of referring to the more advanced and refined modus vivendi of a social group, “culture” has come to denote the totality of “works” created and used to master and sustain some common behaviour or mentality of a higher order (Márkus, 1992, Kondor, 2003).

Klemm (1843) considered culture a step in civilization and, as a result, culture and civilization became synonyms. According to Tylor (1871), culture is a complex whole including knowledge, faith, religion, ethics, law and customs that people access as members of society. At the time of Tylor’s definition, anthropology and psychology were not separate disciplines yet; therefore the concept referred to culture overall, not a special culture (Jahoda, 1984).

Malinowski (1939) argued, that “Culture is basically an instrument for people to help them overcome the issues they face in their environment while satisfying their needs” (Malinowski, 1939, cited by Letenyei, 2012).

Sources from the early 20th century demonstrate the impossibility of having a uniform definition of culture: Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) identified almost 164 different definitions (Hofstede, 1980, Hall and Hall, 1991, Trompenaars, 1993). “Culture consists of explicit or implicit behaviour patterns conveyed by symbols. These symbols are the results of the performance of different groups of people, art products included. The essence of culture consists of traditional thoughts, ideas and mostly of the values related to them. On the one hand, we can consider cultural systems the products of action; on the other hand, the condition system of future deeds” (Kluckhohn, 1952 cited by Adler, 2002, p. 18.).

“Culture is the complex of the transmitted value patterns, ideas and other symbol systems that affect behavior” (Kluckhon, 1951); the totality of material and intellectual values created by a group of people (Jarjabka, 1999).

Culture is thus the pattern of historically transmitted meanings incorporated in symbols; the system of symbolically expressed inherited thoughts by which people communicate, stabilize and develop their knowledge about life, and determine their behavior (Geertz, 2001).

In the opinion of Hall (1960) culture can be captured in patterns considered self-evident by the members of the given culture. These behaviour patterns become clearly visible when an outsider whose actions are governed by different cultural norms enters a cultural community. According to the concept of Leach (1978) the intertwining of cultural events provides information specifically to those who are present there (Leach, 1978, cited by Jahoda, 1996). Lévi-Strauss defines culture as the accumulated totality of products created by the human mind, a symbolic system shared by the members of a culture (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984).

Trompenaars (1997) conceives of culture as a system of customs in which people determine their way of life, decisions and choices sometimes consciously, at other times unconsciously. That’s how values and norms, the milestones of human life, come about. As the established methods keep recurring, they become more and more of a routine in everyday life. It follows from the above that culture is not constant, nor universal.

“Culture is the method by which a group of people solve their problems and decide their dilemmas — then the problems they solve regularly disappear from their minds and become basic assumptions.” (Trompenaars, 1997, pp. 6-7.).

Giddens interprets the concepts of culture and society in close correlation, for there is no culture without society, no society without culture. In his opinion “culture consists of the values preserved by the members of the group, the norms they follow and the material goods they create.” Here values mean the abstract, theoretical images, whereas norms refer to the accepted rules (Giddens, 2002, pp. 61).

According to Hofstede, culture is “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes people belonging to the same group or category from the members of other groups or categories (Hofstede–Hofstede, 2008, p. 345.). Culture is not “congenital”: we learn it from the time of birth and pass it on through generations. The environment where we live affects our behavior, so people living in similar or identical environments usually react the same way to the situations they encounter, which we call ‘mental programming’ or, in this approach, ‘culture’ (Hofstede-Hofstede, 2008).

In the opinion of Thomas (1996) whose definition is based on the elements developed by Kroeber-Kulhohn (1963), Bosch (1980), Triandis (1984), cited by Shroll-Machl (2001), culture “... is a general phenomenon. Everybody lives in a specific culture and develops that further. Culture is a universal orientation system characteristic of a society, organization or group which was created by such specific symbols that are very typical of the society, group or organization and are bequeathed from generation to generation...” (Thomas, 1996, 2005). For persons socialized in the same culture, cultural characteristics are quite natural and ordinary, but if two individuals from two different cultures interact, the encounter of their different orientation systems due to their different cultures may lead to the manifestation/emergence of differences (Thomas, 2005 cited by Topcu, 2005).

The differences of the definitions of culture listed above clearly show the differences in the approaches being applied to interpret culture. According to the summary of House-Wright-Aditya (1997):

- ✓ Culture is a social (communal) phenomenon, which reflects the given form and scale ever of the common agreement.
- ✓ Culture is the collectively developed explanation, interpretation and reading of

entities, activities and events.

- ✓ Cultural norms and cultural forces manifest themselves in language, in behavior and in an objectified form.
- ✓ Cultural variables may become social influencers, because they match the social conditions and the members of the community identify themselves with the values that are based on common agreement.
- ✓ Common experiences and norms based on common agreement have a really powerful socializing effect on the members of the community.
- ✓ Cultural effects are bequeathed from generation to generation within a given community.
- ✓ The social influence of cultural forces can be interpreted as some sort of definite behavioural, emotional and attitudinal orientation for the members of the given community (House-Wright-Aditya, 1997, cited by Bakacsi, 2010).

In order to interpret the discrepancies arising when representatives of Hungarian and Korean culture meet, it was imperative to study first the framework setting of "interpretations of culture". I assumed that "Culture is the complex of those transmitted value patterns, notions and other symbol systems which affect the behaviour" (Kluckhohn, 1951) and that culture can be observed through patterns of behaviour considered self-evident by its members. Such behaviour patterns become clearly visible when an outsider driven by different cultural norms enters the cultural community (Hall, 1960). Culture is thus "... a general phenomenon. Everybody lives in a specific culture and develops that further. Culture is a universal orientation system characteristic of a society, organization or group which was created by such specific symbols that are very typical of the society, group or organization and are bequeathed from generation to generation..." (Thomas, 1996, 2005). For persons socialized in the same culture, cultural characteristics are quite natural and ordinary, but if two individuals from two different cultures interact, the encounter of their different orientation systems due to their different cultures may lead to the manifestation/emergence of differences (Thomas, 2005 cited by Topcu, 2005).

2.1.2 Elements and levels of the culture

In the following, I discuss the elements and levels of culture. Certain authors have defined hierarchic relations between specific subfields of culture, others refer to them simply as components of culture. Therefore, I based my presentation of the works concerned on their dates of publication.

Brinkerhoff and White (1988) assign the components of culture to the material vs. immaterial group. Objectified works, edifices created by mankind are parts of material culture. Language, values, customs, norms, the accumulated system of knowledge and skills shared by members of society are parts of immaterial culture.

Schein (1985) distinguishes four levels of culture in his model. (1) Macro-culture includes nations, regional, ethnic and religious groups. Traditional values, norms and rules of behaviour, moral and religious issues and the view of the world and of man deduced from them belong there. According to Thomas (2003), belonging to a nation, attachment to the mother country and the feeling of citizenship that has developed together with the nations and their citizens in the course of history appear at this level. (2) Organizational culture means the level of companies and organizations. The self-perception and perception of the environment of the members of the organization are based on their unconscious assumptions, values, convictions and beliefs. Organizational culture results from common experiential knowledge and common learning. At level (3), that of subcultures, you will find organisational units within a company, and level (4) of the micro-cultures is the group entity with the smallest headcount where individuals share identical values. At the level of group culture (Bakacsi, 2010), the group preserves the core values of the organization, but supplements them with further values and norms that are typical of the group. The model is usually represented by a pyramid with macro-culture at the top and increasingly differentiated groups by level as we move towards micro-culture (Schein, 1985).

In the model of Bassis, Gelles and Levine (1995), culture consists of six elements: (1) beliefs, (2) values, (3) norms, (4) symbols, (5) technology and (6) language. The elements of that model are not hierarchically structured.

Hofstede (1991) designates six levels of culture: (1) national, (2) regional, (3) sexes, (4) generations, (5) social class and (6) organizational level. In Hofstede's theory the levels are not separated from each other sharply, but are interoperable, and this

subdivision does not exclude simultaneous multilevel membership. People become members of new groups throughout their lives, and they can be members of more than one group simultaneously. Consequently, every community has its own culture and several cultures may be present in one's life simultaneously due to belonging to several groups (Hofstede, 2008).

According to the common view of Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, culture consists of several layers that are not independent of each other but complementary (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997). In the model of Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) culture is divided into three layers: (1) objects and goods, explicit products (2) values and norms and (3) assumptions about existence. The explicit outer layer represents objective and visible reality, to which our everyday objects and products belong (food, art, language). The middle layer refers to the group of individuals, more specifically to the totality of rules accepted by the members of the group. These rules are used to regulate the behavior of group members. The inner, implicit layer includes hidden, less obvious elements which we consider natural yet essential for our existence, such as the most efficient management of the environmental challenges. (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997).

According to Taylor, "the social differentiation of a society can support the development of subcultures. The more complex a culture and the more heterogeneous the population, the more subcultures exist". (Taylor, 2002, p.361.)

Several authors use the iceberg model as symbolic representation of the layers of cultures (Schein, 1986, Heindrich, 2004, Goldman, 1990). The part above the water surface is visible, i.e. this part of culture can be observed also by the outsider observer. Social arrangement and stratification, language and the visible behavior patterns are assigned to this visible range. The invisible, under-water parts of the iceberg are those parts of culture that are invisible to outsiders -- for example, relationships between people, relationship to the world, values, assumptions, beliefs and attitudes (Bakacsi, 2010). Schein divided the invisible part of culture further, into two parts. Individuals from a given culture are typically not aware of such non-visible but definable elements of culture as social values and norms. According to Schein the deepest layer of culture is not visible and people are usually not aware of it. These are beliefs, thoughts about the fundamental issues of human life and existence which determine our thinking, our world view and patterns of behaviour even though we are not aware of them (Bakacsi, 2010).

The iceberg representation of Jarjabka (1999) includes certain elements of Daft's (1992) approach to culture (visible vs. deep level of culture) and Schein's (1986) levels of culture (the invisible but definable one and the deepest cultural level). The tips of the iceberg (social/national, group/corporate, individual/psychical) keep interacting.

In conclusion, the levels and elements of culture impact on the individual; it is difficult to tell exactly how much each influences his behaviour. The levels and components of culture are interrelated and they interact while determining the behaviour of the members of the given culture. Of the levels of culture (Schein, 1985, Hofstede, 1991, Thomas, 2003) I chose the national one as the stage of my research, assuming that members of a culture often link their interpretations to national (cultural) categories, and certain consistent patterns are bound to recur when a member of a culture speaks of the culture of his country (Chevrier, 2009).

2.1.2.1 Organizational culture

I consider it important to study the level of organizational culture more thoroughly. As stated by Primecz (1999) inter alia, the elements and importance of international culture are mastered in childhood as people live and grow up in this medium; as for organisational culture, they get acquainted with it only in the context of their employment, in later age. As the participants of the research are all adult employees, it is important to address the possible effects of organisational culture to better understand the research results.

National and organisational culture evolves through common values produced by the long-term cooperation of individuals. Every organization is embedded in the national culture, and the complexity of this setup is shown by the multinational corporations. The organizational culture of the parent company is an important point of reference for the whole organization, but the culture of its units (e.g. subsidiaries or local branches) active in other cultures is strongly influenced by the main culture of the workers there.

According to O'Reilly and Chatman (1991), organizational culture is the system of common values and norms influencing the behavior of the members of the organization, where values are abstract ideas and norms are actual principles and rules to

be observed by every group member. Bakacsi (2010) defines organizational culture as a system of assumptions, values, convictions, and beliefs acknowledged and jointly interpreted by the members of the organization. They are present in the behavior of employees, in their cooperation and internal and external communication. Organizational culture is the distinctive feature between organizations of similar profiles and structures; it defines their characteristics and organizational personality (Bakacsi, 2010).

Organizational culture is "the pattern of basic assumptions learned by the organization while resolving its internal and external issues, that has been sufficiently satisfactory to be accepted and considered valid and operational in case of encountering similar issues" (Heidrich, 2001).

According to Schein (2004) organizational culture is a set of commonly understood basic assumptions developed by the organization through a learning process of adaptive and internal integrative problem solving, suitable for the members to consider it valid, and for being introduced to new entrants as guideline for adopting appropriate patterns of observation, thinking and behavior should similar problems arise. In brief, "it is the glue that holds the company together" (quoted by Heidrich, 2001)

Bakacsi (2010), interpreting Schein's study, states that organizational culture cannot evolve immediately, as it takes time for the internal and external problems to occur and the relevant responses to be assessed. Therefore, only relatively independent organizations existing for a longer period of time can have their own culture, and that is not identical with the observable forms of behavior.

According to Morgan (1997), language, norms, traditions and social relations play a role in the development of order and organization. These symbols will also support the (re)interpretation of the relationship of the organization and its environment, and promote its adaptation to any changes.

Organizational culture is the organization itself. Culture is a set of behavioral cognitive characteristics that is of utmost importance for detecting, interpreting and responding to phenomena (Bíró-Serfőző, 2003).

Robbins (1993) distinguishes seven values in his model that are decisive elements of organizational culture. (1) Identification with the job or the organization, (2) individual and group focus, (3) human orientation, (4) internal dependence or independence, (5) intensity of control, (6) risk taking, and (7) the dimension of rewarding.

In the organisation, in addition to organizational culture setting the basic values of the organization there are also subcultures that supplement the principles of the dominant culture with the typical unit- or group-specific values. With the support of the subcultures, the organization can adapt properly to any external environmental change (Bakacsi, 2010). We speak of a neutral subculture when the subculture is in a neutral relationship with the dominant one, i.e. it has no influencing role. A supportive culture is one that is in harmony with the dominant organizational culture; the values, assumptions and beliefs of the latter are quite perceptible also in the subculture. In a counter-culture, the values forming the subculture are contradictory to the dominant culture (Heidrich, 2001). This type of subculture is rarely a problem in the organization, but its presence warrants immediate changes (Bakacsi, 2010).

The simplest classification of subcultures is that of professional culture based on occupational differences on the one hand and functional culture associated with distinct organisational units, functional departments within the organisation on the other (Heidrich, 2001).

Newly hired staff are introduced to the culture of the organisation through organisational orientation, i.e. onboarding. Formal socialization, i.e. introduction to the organizational unit and the job, is extended by informal socialization where older employees pass on information and the accepted values to new entrants (Bokor and Szőts-Kováts, 2009). Cultural network refers to the informal communication channels of the organization. New staff members can use that to "learn" about the elements of organizational culture, but management definitely has to consider also informal communication and distorted information due to gossip (Heidrich, 2001). During onboarding, the organization may take deliberate steps to orient the new members, e.g. deliberate transfer of the values of organisational culture, maybe guided by management.

The values of new entrants may even modify the values of organisational culture. If the survival of the company depends on continuous adaptation to the external environment, its culture should apply a similar, more dynamic, easy-to-change system of norms reflecting individual opinions more thoroughly (Heidrich, 2001).

In his onion model, Hofstede (1994) distinguished symbols, heroes, rituals, and values in organisational culture. The essence of the model is that the inner layers become visible as you progress towards the deeper layers of culture. Symbols, heroes and rituals

are directly visible and perceptible to the outsider observer. Symbols include words, gestures, objects, clothing articles carrying a special meaning and known only to the members of the given culture. This external layer is easy to change (new symbols arise, old ones disappear), and it is also easy to reproduce in other cultures. Heroes may be living or dead creatures, real or imaginary ones, whose behaviour is a model example for the members of the culture. Rituals are customs considered important in the given culture. Values are not directly perceptible to other cultures. Values contain standards to be accepted and followed by people.

Bokor (2000) also concludes that the term "organizational culture" is rather uncertain since no unanimous definition exists even for "organization" or for "culture". Therefore, understanding a culture is a useful tool in creating the strategy and management of the organization, but it is also influenced by numerous factors such as environmental conditions, the specifics of the industry and the national cultures (Heidrich, 2006).

2.1.3 Possible interpretations of culture

Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) compiled a summary of the various interpretations of culture, with the field of management organization in mind. The list of the schools of the interpretation of culture makes it easier to demonstrate the strands of thinking of researchers in this field of the discipline. House, Wright and Aditya (1977) summed up the similarities discernible in the interpretations of culture despite the diversity of the definitions. Although their summary was published in 1977 and some explanations of culture date from later times, I think that it is worth mentioning as their findings are still topical.

Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) distinguished two fundamental approaches to the interpretation of culture: (1) the socio-cultural school[5] (socio-cultural system) and (2) the ideation school. According to the representatives of School (1), culture is part of the social system and manifests itself in the products of human behaviour, way of life and behaviour. The (1A) synchronic school is part of the socio-cultural school, and it professes that culture is examined at a given time and place, and the (1B) diachronic

[5] In making this part I relied on a German source and also a Hungarian one (Topcu (2005)) to check the terminology and better understand the theory. I rely on the same Hungarian source in the Hungarian names of the various schools.

school focusing on the examination of the development process of certain cultures considering also the time dimension also belongs here. The two strands of the (1A) synchronic school are the (1Aa) functionalist and the (1Ab) the structural-functionalist schools. Functionalists look for basic assumptions and beliefs among the characteristics of culture that influence the representatives of the given culture subconsciously (Schein, 1985 cited by Topcu, 2005). They consider culture a static phenomenon which is present in the members of a given culture relatively unchanged in time. As per the (1Ba) school of ecological adaptation, culture is the totality of socially conveyed behaviour patterns, implying bidirectional connection to the ecological environment. The representatives of the (1Bb) school of social history consider culture a formation shaped by historical circumstances and developments.

The representatives of the ideational system school (2) separate the social and the cultural sector. Three (2A) out of four concepts belonging here consider the social sector an objective part of reality, but treat culture as subjective reality. The representatives of the cognitive school (2Aa) consider culture a knowledge system; therefore, their enquiries target the identification of the knowledge structures, the mental maps. For the mutual equivalence school (2Ab) culture is an element of the individual's social integration that creates some kind of framework for predicting each other's behaviour. For the representatives of the structuralist school (2Ac), the visible manifestations of culture differ only on the surface: the thinking mechanisms creating them are identical. Therefore, they assume that the various cultures must have common features (Allarie and Firsirotu, 1984).

According to the representatives of the symbolic school (2Ba), on the other hand, culture exists in the interpretations, meanings and symbols created by people (Ahn, 2003, Allaire és Firsirotu, 1984, Barinaga 1998, Geertz 2001, Mármarosi, 2012, Topcu, 2005). In their opinion, culture is not independent of the actor since it is a social construct that exists in the form of meaning and practice created in social interaction. Knowledge and truth mean things created, not explored by the mind (Gergen, 1991, Schwandt, 1994, Topcu, 2005). Culture may be conceived of as a shared system of meanings, a fabric woven of meanings (Geertz, 2001 cited by Topcu, 2005).

In summary we can say that the definition of culture has changed in time and space, and in modern times it has also developed in line with the specific disciplines, field of research and the pragmatic orientation of the researcher. According to the interpretation of Allaire and Firsirotu (1984), culture is part of the social system and manifests itself in human behaviour, way of life and the products of that behaviour. That is, in their view, culture is to be investigated at a specific place and time, and they look for basic assumptions and beliefs manifesting themselves in the specifics of culture that influence its representatives subconsciously (Schein, 1985). In my interpretation based on Allarie and Firsirotu (1984), culture is a static phenomenon that is present in its members roughly unchanged in time. Cultural research applying the static approach typically defines a certain culture by the frontiers of the corresponding national culture; therefore, the scope of my research will be defined by the borders of South Korea.

2.1.4 Methods of cultural research and the main cultural researches

Topcu (2005) tackles the question how culture should be looked at when it is being interpreted and examined. Does "culture exist on its own right, objectively, as an essence and behavioral context, or does it only exist as an abstraction developed by its members and the observers, as meanings and symbols assigned by people to things and events"? (Berry 1993, Nguyen 2003 cited by Topcu, 2005). Cultural researchers do not adopt a unified stance on the matter and they keep using different criteria and methods to better understand cultures.

Supplementing the findings of Topcu (2005), I examine cultural researches based on the following distinctive features: (1) Whether the research studies the static or the dynamic features of culture; (2) how it delimits culture as the entity under study; which of its levels it targets; (3) whether it applies an emic or etic approach; (4) whether it is cross-cultural (focusing on the comparability of cultures) or inter-cultural (interested in the processes triggered by the meeting of several cultures); (5) whether culture in the interaction of cultures is considered a source of conflicts or a potential asset; (6) what its relationship to psychology is and (7) which paradigm is chosen as the context of the studies.

The static approach to culture aspires to identify those beliefs, basic assumptions and socially embedded patterns of culture that change slowly or not at all over time. Culture affects the thinking and behaviour of its members, but whether that works both ways is beyond the scope of my research. The dynamic approach to culture, on the other hand, assumes that the various group-specific meaning systems are being reinterpreted continuously through individual and social constructional processes. Therefore, the researches concerned try to understand culture through individual interpretations, social interactions and by analysing common meanings and practices and the way they come about (Nguyen, 2003, Topcu, 2005, Primecz, 2006). Cultural researches applying the static approach typically define culture by the limits of national culture. They disregard the existence of subcultures and of subcultural (e.g. racial, territorial, professional, ethnic and linguistic) diversity within a nation (Primecz, 2000) (Soderberg/Holden, 2002). Cultural researches adopting the dynamic approach accept that the members of a culture can be members in several cultural communities (subculture) simultaneously. In that case, no general conclusions can be drawn from the sample; because of the method, the results can be interpreted only in the given context (Alvesson, 2000, Soderberg and Holden, 2002).

Researches dealing with culture use those levels of culture as units of study where they have information on the processes taking place there and the connection points of the given level to others. Most researches target the macro-cultural level, that is, they deal with national cultures. Researchers of the macro-cultural level must make their definition of national culture clear, i.e. whether they use the national borders or a group of the population to define the scope of the research. In studies of organizational culture, researches examine the organization, whereas sub-cultural studies focus on the exploration of the typical values and norms of a group.

The terms “etic” and “emic” originate from Pike who wanted to describe behaviour by two different approaches (insider and outsider) so as to have overlapping results and thus a full-scale image (Pike, 1967 cited by Berry, 1993) Similarly to the concept of phonetics and phonemics: originally, phonetics examined the universal nature of languages, whereas phonemics focused on the meaning, the context of words (Niblo-Jackson, 2004). The etic cultural research school (outsider approach) relies on the assumption that cultures are comparable, since every culture includes certain basic dimensions (universalia) that can be interpreted by anyone, irrespective of cultural

background. The etic school observes cultures from outside. The emic approach (insider approach), on the other hand, considers the given culture and the individuals in it, the dimensions of culture, unique, and it describes them by using its own concepts. Therefore, this approach examines a single culture, observing it from inside (Pike, 1967 cited by Berry 1993). In spite of their significant differences, the two approaches must not be treated as opposing ones; more and more researchers think that they should be used complementarily, since the fullest understanding of culture requires their combined use that will also resolve the conflict of the cross-cultural versus inter-cultural approaches. In his model Berry (1993) developed the option of the combined use of the two approaches. In the three-step model the researcher first (1) takes over the concepts and measuring tools used for the research from his own culture. Then (2) he examines their applicability to the culture under study, to filter out any elements that have a meaning only in one culture. As a last step (3), he continues his work with the features that can be interpreted in both cultures and can therefore be used as dimensions (Berry, 1993).

Comparative, i.e. cross-cultural, researches compare two or more cultures based on identical criteria (e.g. main dimensions). In the cultures under study, data surveys are conducted separately (usually with quantitative tools), then the respective results are aggregated and compared based on predefined criteria (e.g. main dimensions). Researches of encounters of two or more cultures investigate the interactions of their respective representatives (Barinaga, 1998). Intercultural research makes it possible to identify cultural differences; according to Barinaga (1998), the cultural specifics of the interacting parties develop through the interaction of their cultures.

The encounter of cultures can be considered a source of conflicts if the potential discrepancy of the assumptions carried by the individuals coming from different cultures is a potential source of conflict (Soderberg and Holden, 2002). Therefore, inter-cultural research considers it its mission to promote the treatment of cultural differences (Barinaga, 1998, Soderberg and Holden, 2002). The researches considering the encounter of people from different cultures an opportunity profess that the different values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviour patterns are reinterpreted during such meetings and this may lead to a jointly developed system of values and thoughts (Barinaga, 1998).

Psyche and culture are mutually constitutive and complementary entities that are integral parts of each other; although they do not include each other, they have no own identity or independent meaning in themselves, since all these depend on the way people

seize and utilise them. Thus the inseparability of psyche and culture is its central element (Nguyen, 2003). We cannot speak of a single, uniform research school in the field of cultural psychology, but those sharing this view interpret each and every phenomenon as being unique, as gaining its meaning in its specific environment and therefore to be investigated there, which excludes the possibility of direct comparisons. The aim of the field is to understand the individual in his own context. Cultural comparative psychology, on the other hand, examines the similarities and differences of individual psychological functionality in different cultural and ethnic groups. We list here the connection between psychological variables, socio-cultural/biological variables, and the examination of changes of these variables (Berry, 1992). This approach examines whether (1) the existing psychological knowledge and theories can be generalized, and (2) if the results cannot be generalized in a given culture, it tries to identify the underlying reasons. Inserting the research results into the field of psychology (3) is also part of the process. Intercultural psychology examines human behaviour and experiencing, and its effects. Typically, in the situations under study people from different cultures interact and the investigation focuses on the culture-specific effects of psychologically relevant processes impacting on behaviour, such as information processing, perception, evaluation, decision-making and emotions. The main feature of intercultural situations is that their participants are persons socialised in different cultures, so their acts are determined by the values and norms that are typical of their culture, but unknown to the other party. This leads to a complex situation (Thomas, 1996).

The classification of cultural researches may be based on how the researcher sees himself and the subject of his study. The value-free, fact-based approach of objective researches assumes that cultural phenomena are static, so they change slowly or not at all and, therefore, the results of the researches will be similar. This is why, to meet the conditions of generalizability, most often some quantitative research methodology is applied. In researches adopting the subjective view, on the other hand, the research experience is provided by the analysis of the insights and interpretations of the research subjects and that will hardly produce the same results in every case and can therefore be considered valid only at that particular place and in that situation. Their most frequently used research methodology is qualitative research. Originally, the interpretation of paradigms was related to organizational theories, but the study of Primecz et al. (2009)

differentiated the picture by linking researches in intercultural management to the paradigms of organization theories.

Based on the subject of the study, we can distinguish between value- and (human) action-based cultural research. The following will be about the distinction of the two and the definition of their respective scopes.

When examining the encounter of cultures, interactions between the representatives of two or more cultures are examined (Barinaga, 1998). Intercultural cultural research can identify cultural differences through intercultural interaction (Hatch és Yanow, 2003). In my research, I look on the meeting of individuals from different cultures as a source of conflict; in the interactions concerned, values, beliefs, assumptions and behaviour patterns are reinterpreted and a common value and thought system evolves (Barinaga, 1998).

Intercultural psychology examines human behaviour and experiencing, and its effects. Typically, in the situations under study people from different cultures interact and the investigation focuses on the culture-specific effects of psychologically relevant processes impacting on behaviour, such as information processing, perception, evaluation, decision-making and emotions. The main feature of intercultural situations is that their participants are persons socialised in different cultures, so their acts are determined by the values and norms that are typical of their culture, but unknown to the other party. This leads to a complex situation (Thomas, 1996). This is the reason why I considered it relevant to cover in the research stress or cultural conflicts experienced by the interviewees, to be presented in later chapters.

2.1.4.1 Value-based cultural researches

The word “value” originates from Latin “valere” meaning ‘to feel good’, ‘to be strong’. The concept was first used in philosophy, with a distinction being made between “right things” belonging to the domain of ethics and “good things” belonging to that of value (Bem, 1970). During the previous century, the concept of value was mentioned in more and more scientific subsystems, and although it had different definitions in each discipline, it became an overarching concept capable of interconnecting heterogeneous

fields and contributing to the development of inter-disciplinary cooperation (Kluckhohn, 1951, Kluckhohn et al., 1961, Rokeach, 1969).

The first value researchers, such as Firth (1953) and Fallding (1965), defined value as the principle arranging behavior and actions into a system, whereas modern scholars such as Schwartz (2002) defined it as goals to be achieved, acting as guiding principles on our actions. Value definitions agree in considering value a long-term guideline that organizes behavior and action into a consistent system; an implicit or explicit concept specific to an individual or a certain group; encouraging action leading to the desired result (Kluckhohn, 1951, Rokeach, 1979, Schwartz, 2012, cited by Kovács, 2017).

Kluckhohn (1951) defined values as factualities (typical of an individual or a group) that necessarily determine action, i.e. specify the combination of the available tools, the goals and the methods. According to Kluckhohn the main determinants of the values themselves are social relationships. The development of values can be associated with internal resources, i.e. various self-concepts, and with external resources, i.e. social determinations. In default case, all the values may coexist, but in case of a conflict of interest due to some decision, the dominant values will prevail to the detriment of the peripheral ones. Kluckhorn called the values concerned central or dominant, and peripheral or variant values, respectively, in his research. The goal of his value research was to examine the meanings and drivers of certain well-definable phenomena or social action. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) were the first to study various communities based on dimensions. They examined the values present in culture along five dimensions: human behavior, people-nature (supernatural) relationship, time orientation, activity orientation and relationship orientation (Primecz, 2006). These dimensions determined the behaviour and attitude of the individuals belonging to the given culture.

The most important cultural research models closely related to my study are summarized in Table 3

Lenski (1961) conducted the first empirical value research in a population of Protestants and Catholics in Detroit. Lipset (1963) examined the national values of Australia, Canada, England and the United States, respectively, while Almond-Verba (1965) researched the political attitudes of the populations of the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Mexico, respectively. Lerman (1968) examined the values

of geng groups. Lipset (1963) was the first to conduct value researches based on cross-country comparisons.

According to Rokeach (1973), values are persistent convictions which identify preferences concerning the final states of existence (target values) or behaviors (asset values). Asset values apply to a certain behavior, whereas target values express a desired final state. According to Bem (1970), when people are explaining the behavior of an individual, they refer to three components. These components were identified by Rokeach (1969) as beliefs, values and attitudes. These phenomena can be interpreted separately, but they are closely related logically. The priority of values states that part of the basic beliefs is built upon values, and basic beliefs in turn exert great influence on attitude (Bem, 1970 quoted by Kovács, 2016). Attitudes are evaluations, to be interpreted along the dimension of "likes and dislikes" (Bem, 1970, Schwartz, 2012). According to Katz (1960), attitudes express values. Rokeach (1969) defines attitudes as the means of the values. Katz (1960) and Rokeach (1973) underline that attitudes have a very important value-expressing role; values support the attitudes, because they play a key role in defining how we should behave.

At the time of the first value researches (between 1950 and 1970) common theoretical bases were accepted concerning the determination of values at individual and also social level. At individual level, these are the following: (1) social behavior is intended and focused, (2) values are matters of interest to people, things that they desire, that they would like to become, that they consider obligatory for themselves, that they love or hate, (3) values affect the choice of the ways and means leading to such things, that is, they are essential determinants of human behavior, (4) as for their social connections, values are not always consistent with each other, but each society has its dominant values that lend it its unique qualities, (5) the dominant values are lasting and since they are present in a broad spectrum of society, they have a significant role in developing stability and integrity (Ságvári, 2009).

At the time of the closure of the first period of value researches, several conclusions had been drawn concerning value research that contributed significantly to theoretical and empirical works in later theory and research. It had become accepted that (1) values play an important role, (2) values are diverse if you consider different social groups and nations and (3) often the behavior of people does not reflect their professed

values and certain values are only words (declared values), because the environment does not make it possible to act according to them (Ságvári, 2007).

According to the critics of value research, instead of/in addition to value-based research, culture should be looked at from a broader perspective including language, the symbols, collective memories, stories and rituals. Other critiques considered values inadequate to serve as the basis of large-scale methodological research due to the excessive weight of individual preferences (Swidler, 1986). Rokeach (1973) was the first to point out that basic categories of values, the description of their connections as well as the methodology to measure them were missing. Modern value researchers (for example Inglehart and Schwartz) made attempts to resolve this issue, but no commonly accepted approach has evolved to this day.

The international network World Values Survey Association[6] (WVS) led by Inglehart has been researching value changes and their impact on society and politics since 1981. The aim of that research is to examine the changes of the international and cross-cultural value systems. It makes available the data of 400 thousand respondents from 100 countries, with representative samples from each country. Six rounds of the research had been conducted by the end of 2016 (1981-1984, 1990-1994, 1995-1998, 1999-2004, 2005-2009, 2010-2014), and the 7th one will take place in 2017-2018.

In his studies of changes in the way of thinking (values) of people, Inglehart (1997) examines economic development and cultural and political changes together, and he considers them predictable in some sense. According to Inglehart first the traditional value system based on authority is transformed into a modern one, then the modern one into a post-modern one. Process (1) could be called modernization: the direction of change points from the religious values of the community towards rational values motivating performance, while society undergoes secularization and bureaucratization. Process (2) is post-modernization, with a shift in favour of the values of self-expression and subjective well-being, and society becomes more individual yet more tolerant concurrently, and openness and publicity (freedom of expression) move to the foreground. Process (3) leads to the post-industrial era, and the individual is subject to multiple impacts: (3A) higher standards of living due to the economic development, together with the increase in life expectancy, change the basic life goals at the level of

[6] http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp

society. (3B) changes in the structure of the workforce lead to the appreciation of knowledge and IT in the activities of more and more people. Therefore, the importance of autonomy at work increases of necessity. Additional effects of the process include the growing number of people with higher qualifications and the consequent increase of the level of intellectual independence. ICT development facilitates access to knowledge and information, which also acts in favour of independence/autonomy (Dessewffy 2005). Post-industrial transition (3C) has a liberating effect also at social level. Its decentralized and personalized nature frees human relationships from the earlier bonds and it decreases the role of the family as a community driven by economic interest (Inglehart – Welzel, 2005 cited by Ságvári, 2009).

According to the thesis of Inglehart about the direction of social development, it is possible to determine the likely direction of socio-economic changes (Inglehart, 1997 cited by Keller, 2009). The global value map drawn up in the wake of that study has revealed the existence of cultural zones. Inglehart (1997) creates two dimensions based on more than twenty variables. In the first dimension that he calls the traditional authority / secular-rational authority axis he measures basically religious, family and national ties. The other axis, that of survival and well-being, is meant to measure the emergence of social publicity. In practice, this is carried out by analyzing the indicators of trust and tolerance and the size of civil society, so it is also known as the axis of closed / open thinking. (Inglehart, 1997 quoted by Keller, 2009) The axes created by Inglehart (1997) can be reproduced based on Inglehart and Baker (2000) or Welzel (2006).

Inglehart's value theory has been criticized by many. Its most thorough critic was Haller (2002) explaining why the clusters based on Inglehart's dimensions could not be used.

Using the quantitative, questionnaire-based methodology, further researches began based on the work of Inglehart, for example the European Value Study[7] (EVS), the European Social Survey[8] (ESS), and the General Social Survey[9] (GSS) that are all collecting reliable, international data suitable for longitudinal comparison.

Hofstede (1983) examined the differences between national cultures by using standardized questionnaires on large samples and analyzing them by statistical methods.

[7] http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/
[8] http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/
[9] http://www.gss.norc.org/

The subjects of the researches (conducted between 1967 and 1973) were asked about their basic values and beliefs. Hofstede had an outstanding and unique impact on the technical literature of comparative cultural research. He was the first to note (based on the works of Kluckhohn and Strodbeck, 1961, Hall, 1966) that even though intuitive stereotypes about cultural differences have always existed, there was a need to measure the differences systematically and by using well-defined categories and covering as many countries as possible. (Primecz, 1999).

Based on the results of his research, he established four (later, finally, six) dimensions: (1) power distance, (2) individualism/collectivism, (3) masculinity/femininity, (4) uncertainty avoidance. Utilizing Hofstede's results, Triandis distinguished group-level vs. individual individualism/collectivism, naming the latter idiocentric/allocentric (Triandis, 1988 cited by Topcu, 2005). In 1979, the research was supplemented by a fifth dimension, (5) short-term and long-term orientation, based on the Chinese Value Research (Hofstede-Bond, 1988). In the Chinese Value Research, Michael Bond asked Chinese social scientists to list the 10 most fundamental Chinese values, which he supplemented with values based on his own observations. The concepts of consideration, providence, endurance and perseverance belong to long-term orientation, while respecting traditions and complying with social standards to short-term orientation. The positive as well as negative values of this dimension can be found in the Confucian tenets, but they are not exclusively present in cultures with such heritage. In dimension (6) of restraint or indulgence, societies in which satisfying basic and natural human needs is relatively free from constraints orientate toward indulgence. This is related to enjoying life and having fun. On the side of restraint are cultures where the above regulated by strict social norms (Hofstede et al., 2011).

Although the research was a pioneer of its kind, Primecz (1999, 2006) underlines that the dimensions of the four-dimension model are not independent of each other; for example, the dimensions of individualism and power distance correlate in factor analysis, because originally they belonged to a single dimension which was later divided by Hofstede for theoretical reasons. Data collection under the Chinese Value Survey (Hofstede and Bond, 1988) did not confirm the original uncertainty avoidance dimension of the original survey, yet that was not cancelled from the model. The masculinity/femininity dimension received a lot of criticism due to its name reinforcing

gender stereotypes. Hofstede, however, decided to keep its name because male and female respondents gave systematically different answers.

The work of Hofstede was a milestone in cultural research, and most scientists keep using his data. In case of Hungary, two kinds of data series are used. The original data displayed also on Hofstede's site (https://geert-hofstede.com/hungary.html) were based on a small, non-representative sample. In three dimensions, his data are diametrically opposed to the results of the representative Hungarian research led by Hungarians. Károly Varga (2008) explains that in more detail in his preface to Hofstede's book. Following the recommendations of Primecz (1999, 2006), although I used the data of Hofstede in my research, I supplemented them with the data of the representative Hungarian sample recommended by Varga (2008).

The Hofstede research was criticised also by Schwartz (2003). Schwartz designed his own model for defining the universal human values, with a view to eliminate the grounds for his own critical remarks. He agreed with Hofstede that the adequate model was one that examined cultural differences through universal dimensions, but he was of the opinion that emic dimensions were to be included to reveal the unique nature of each culture. The aim of Schwartz (2006) was to create integrated value categories. He defined values as goals to be achieved, acting as drivers of our actions. He made six statements concerning values: Values are (1) such beliefs and conviction that impact on our feelings, emotions directly; (2) they express desirable goals and behaviours that represent the bases of the motives of our actions, that is, we are likely to represent the values which are important to us also "outwards", towards the outside world; (3) Their significance points beyond specific actions and situations; (4) they are "guidelines" impacting on how we act in a given situation or how we judge specific situations, people or behaviors. (5) They can be ranked by importance, to reveal the value system of an individual or a whole society. (6) The different values keep interacting, and action is determined by their relative relevance.

In his circular model of values, Schwartz makes the assumption that the bases of the internal world of people are defined by values. Every person has multiple values which are in permanent dynamic interaction with each other and form a slowly changing structure. Choices of multiple perspective, which assume that multiple, interacting values are taken into account, are part of everyday life. This was the basis of his researches applying quantitative methods and a survey overarching several cultures in order to define

a given number of universal core human values (Schwartz, 1992, 1994, 1996 quoted in Kovács, 2017).

The cross-cultural quantitative research model of Schwartz (tested in more than 65 countries in more than 200 surveys) resulted in ten general value types that he represented in a circular model. At the four endpoints of the two axes of the circular model are the value categories concerning self-transcendence and self-enhancement, openness and conservation. The values occupying opposite positions in the circular model are conflicting ones, whereas the ones next to each other are supplementary and mutually reinforcing ones, and that's how the value orientation of a given person is formed (Schwartz, 1992; 1994; 1996 quoted in Kovács, 2017).

The model contains ten basic value dimensions divided into four higher categories, which can be used to compare cultures (Schwartz, 2003): (1) Self-transcendence: benevolence, universalism, (2) Openness to change: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, (3) Self-enhancement: achievement, power, (4) Conservation: security, conformity, tradition. Further refinement of the Schwartz theory is currently in progress, with the extension of the ten categories of values to nineteen (Schwartz et al., 2012).

Each of the ten values can be described by the associated motivational value:

1. Self-direction: independent thought and action, creating, exploring
2. Stimulation: excitement, novelty, and challenge in life
3. Hedonism: pleasure or sensuous gratification
4. Achievement: personal success according to social standards
5. Power: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources
6. Security: safety, harmony, and stability of society and of relationships
7. Conformity: restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and to violate social expectations or norms
8. Tradition: respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's traditional culture or religion provides
9. Benevolence: preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact
10. Universalism: understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection of the welfare of all people and of nature (Csite-Luksander-Mike, 2012).

The GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) research, a complex, long-term, large-sample qualitative research involving 170 researchers of 62 countries, examines organizational and the national culture and their connection with leadership. It examines nine cultural dimensions based on the answers of employees working in the middle management of different industries (three fixed sectors: food industry, telecommunications and financial sector). We can summarize the culture interpretation of the research team of GLOBE as follows: "Culture is the complex of motivations, values, persuasions, identities and common interpretations or meanings of essential events shared by all the members of the community, derived from the common experiences of the members of the community, which is bequeathed through the generations (House, 2004 cited by Bakacsi, 2006). Besides the above general basic definition it is important to point out the remarkable methodological novelty of GLOBE. While the previous international comparative cultural researches typically measured and interpreted the differences of culture by the means of descriptive dimensions and examined "how things are" (the "as is" dimension), GLOBE introduced the concept of "should be", i.e. the normative (prescribing) dimensions reflecting the expectation of respondents as to "how things should be". This makes it possible to measure not just the national and organisational cultures perceived by the respondents, but also those that would be desirable in their opinion (Bakacsi, 2006).

Source:	**Original dimension**	**GLOBE dimension**
Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck	Time orientation	Future orientation
	Human nature	Human orientation
	Relationship orientation	
McClelland	Achievement motivation theory	Achievement orientation
Hofstede	Power distance	Power distance
	Uncertainty avoidance	Uncertainty avoidance
	Individualism and collectivism	Institutional collectivism
		Group collectivism
	Masculinity	Assertiveness
		Gender equality

Table 1 GLOBE dimensions and their source (Primecz, 2006), author's compilation

McClelland's (1965) achievement-power theory fits among the content theoretical approaches to motivation. In his opinion, high achievement is due to the differences in family background, attitudes, cultural values and qualification, and not to innate differences.

In the following, I will present the GLOBE research dimensions based on House et al. (2004).

The dimension of power distance measures how the members of an organization or society expect or accept the unequal distribution of power and it corresponds to the scale that the member with the least power in the organization yet accepts. According to the findings of Hofstede, in countries characterised by a big power distance, the traditional concept of authority is dominant. The survey also found correlation between the power distance of societies and their level of corruption. According to the annual Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of Transparency International, a country's economic performance and the extent of corruption are inversely proportional — usually the latter is the highest in the poorest countries and the lowest in the rich ones[10].

Uncertainty avoidance expresses to what extent the given society can tolerate uncertain and ambiguous situations, how secure people feel in such situations. The most important to note about the degrees of endurance of uncertainty and risk-taking is that they are different by individual. It is possible to tell at social level what strategies may be chosen to manage this, but the accepted and supported or on the contrary disapproved status of such strategies differs by culture. In cultures avoiding uncertainty, uncertain situations give rise to fear, intensive anxiety and stress; the future seems to be mostly unpredictable and it is seen as a threat rather than an opportunity.

The values of institutional collectivism show how the norms and practice of the given society support the collective distribution of resources and collective action.

Group collectivism, on the other hand, measures how loyal, proud and convergent the individuals are in a given social group. According to the results of Hofstede, poorer countries are characterized by collectivistic values, and rich countries by individualistic ones. Group collectivism appears as a value per se rather than the counter-pole of individualism, and it measures the cohesion and loyalty of the smaller community.

[10] http://www.transparency.org

The dimension of gender equality expresses how society minimizes gender inequalities and supports their equality, whereas the dimension of assertiveness refers to the sturdiness, confrontation or aggressiveness of individuals in social relationships. The most important characteristic of this value dimension is that, unlike the other four categories of Hofstede, it does not correlate with the development of the countries: poor and rich countries may equally be masculine or feminine.

Achievement orientation values indicate to which extent society urges the individuals to enhance their performance and whether it rewards them for it. Future-orientation measures to what extent the given society supports and values future-oriented behavior such as planning and investment into the future.

Finally, human orientation shows how society rewards justice, care and generosity shown by group members towards others (House at al., 2004, Bakacsi, 2006).

The cultural metaphor theory of Gannon (2001) differs from the dimension-based cultural research theories in that it examines a single culture, and even that from the inside, through its members. The cultural metaphor is an identified, easy-to-remember culture-specific phenomenon, institution or action with which the members of the culture can identify emotionally and intellectually and strangers to the culture can use it to interpret and thus almost "experience" the given environment (Gannon et al., 2012). Cultural metaphors have been examined by quantitative questionnaires. Two questions were asked in connection with the pre-defined metaphor options: (1) whether the respondent could identify with the characteristics generated from the metaphor and (2) whether he could distinguish himself from other cultures by the characteristics concerned. Gannon (2012) has warned that metaphors are to be used carefully, because they are defined on a national level and, therefore, cannot identify groups at sub-cultural level and cease to be valid at individual level. Gannon's (2001) cultural metaphors are for example Italian opera, American football, the German symphony or the Swedish stuga.

2.1.4.2 Cultural researches based on action theory

The main pillar of value researches was the statement that the values people adhere to are the key determinants of human behavior. Importance and diversity of the role of values among different social groups and nations (Ságvári, 2009). Cultural researches

based on action theory have brought a somewhat different approach to the research of culture. They focus on action as dedicated analytical unit and interpret it as behavior put in context, with reference not only to the actor, but also the purpose and underlying intent of the action. Culture as an effect on individual behavior/action becomes the analytical unit instead of the examination of the value-driven actions (Berry et al, 1992). Boesch (1991) underlined the mutual aspect of the situation, that is, not only does the environment influence the individual, but individuals also actively shape, i.e. impact on, their environment. To conclude, cultural researches based on action theory highlight reciprocity between the individual and the environment, underlining the dynamic nature of culture and using action as the central category for better understanding its characteristics and resources.

E. Hall (1960) examined four dimensions in detail: he dealt with time orientation, the different levels of communication, the role of space and the forms of the information flow. His researches showed that interpersonal communication largely depended on the relationship of the communicating parties. He has pointed out that, during interpersonal interaction, actual or perceived knowledge concerning the partner implicitly flows into communication and becomes its context (Topcu, 2005, Primecz, 2006). Hall found that cultures can be grouped as per whether communication is happening in a low or high context. During the examination of the time orientation dimension he found that basically two cultures, the monochronic and the polychronic one, could be distinguished. In monochronic cultures people typically concentrate on doing one thing at a time; they rank these things and do them in the order they are written in their calendar. Contrarily, in polychronic cultures things are performed simultaneously, and deadlines and delays are dealt with flexibly. According to Hall, the previous two dimensions correlate: cultures with high context are typically polychronic, those with low context are rather monochronic (Primecz, 2006).

Trompenaars (1993) and Hampden-Turner (1998) based their work on Hofstede (1980) and created a new intercultural comparative dimension system. Its scientific soundness has remained questionable to this date, but the model has become popular among practitioners, and it has made its way to intercultural education (Primecz – Soós, 2000). The model drawn in the course of Trompenaars' research provides a framework for people from different cultures to cooperate and understand each other's behaviour in everyday business life. The first five of the seven dimensions of the model

(universalims/particularism, individualism/collectivism, neutral/emotional, specific/diffuse, acquired/inherited position, sequential/parallel time orientation, external/internal control of the environment) deal with relationships among people; the sixth is about the interpretation of time, and the seventh deals with the relationship of man and the environment.

The dimension of universalism/particularism (1) examines the extent of priority of the impersonal rules vs. interpersonal relations in a culture. The characteristics of the particularistic organizational behavior are disregarding any rules considered pointless and the outstanding cultural role of personal acquaintances in corporate processes. The characteristics of the dimension of individualism/collectivism (2) are similar to those of the dimension indicated by a similar name under the GLOBE project. The specification of the neutral/emotional dimension (3) is that neutral societies and organizations prefer a distance-keeping behavior with strong self-control, whereas emotional ones accept open behavior with emotional overtones. The specific/diffuse approach (4) examines to what extent employees are integrated into the organization. The issues at hand may be treated by direct or indirect "templates", but treatment always involves deeper personal relations. The acquired/inherited position (5) measures whether social statuses are acquired by on personal achievement and knowledge, or whether inherited social/organizational status promotes the acquisition of goods. Sequential/parallel time orientation (6) measures the attitude to time. This feature distinguishes cultures oriented towards the past, the present and the future, respectively. The internal/external control of the environment (7) describes whether those concerned intend to dominate nature or be in a harmonious relationship with it (Trompenaars, 1993, Hampden and Turner, 1998, cited by Jarjabka, 1999, Primecz-Soós, 2000).

The cultural standards method by Thomas (2005) endeavours to explore the cultural aspects underlying the actions of individuals, and calls upon critical interactional situations occurring in bicultural environments for help. Critical interactional situations (critical here meaning 'a memorably positive or negative experience') occur between at least two individuals with different cultural backgrounds where one (or both) party considers the behaviour of the other unusual (i.e. difficult to interpret, surprising, unexpected) (quoted by Topcu, 2006). The method examines the representatives of one culture through the "spectacles" of representatives of another one (Topcu, 2005). The examination method is qualitative: researchers make and analyze narrative interviews. In

the course of the interviews, respondents recall critical interactional memories experienced with a member of the same subculture of an alien culture retrospectively. By looking back, they can reconsider, reinterpret and assess the situation and that helps better understand the alien culture (Topcu, 2005). It is not absolutely necessary to know whether the recalled interactions had actually happened the way the interviewee told them, because the crucial point for the research result is how the interviewee experienced that situation and how he explains it (Topcu, 2006).

The main pillar of value researches is the finding that the values people adhere to are the basic determinants of human behaviour (Ságvári, 2009), that is, value-driven action may serve as the basis of the research. Action theoretical cultural research, on the other hand, focuses on action as a special analytical unit and interprets it as behavior put in context, referring not only to the person of the actor, but also to its purpose and the underlying intention (Berry et al., 1992). I will reflect on the value-based and action theoretical cultural researches presented in the theoretical section at the end of the thesis, when I will compare my research findings with those of previous cultural researches to assess the contribution of the first to the relevant earlier theories.

Assessment criterion	**Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961)**	**Hofstede (1980)**	**GLOBE (2002)**	**Schwartz (1992)**	**Cultural metaphor (2012)**	**Cultural standards method**	**Hall (1990)**	**Trompenaars (1993)**
Subject assessed by the research	value					human activity		
Assessment perspective	international comparison				mono-cultural	multi-cultural	international comparison	
Static/Dynamic	static					dynamic	static	
Culture as unit of assessment	national culture					subculture	national culture	
Emic/etic approach	etic		etic, emic	emic			etic	
Examination of one culture/comparability of cultures/identification of typical processes of the encounter of cultures	comparative approach				examination of one culture	typical processes occurring when cultures meet	comparative approach	
Encounter of cultures: opportunity / source of conflict	opportunity					source of conflict	opportunity	
Research goal	explanatory					problem-detecting	explanatory	
Examination method	quantitative methodology					qualitative methodology	quantitative methodology	
Connection between culture and psychology	cultural comparative psychology				-	intercultural psychology	cultural comparative psychology	

Table 2 Cultural researches and their assessment criteria, author's compilation

Researchers	**Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961)**	**Hofstede (1980)**	**Hall (1990)**	**Schwartz (1992)**	**Trompenaars (1993)**	**GLOBE (2002)**
Dependent variable	Problem-solving skills of humans	National cultural differences within an organisation	Workplace communication	Present and future in society	Relevant problem-solving by management	Business leadership in the present and the future
Independent variable	5 dimensions	4+2 dimensions	4 dimensions	10 dimensions	7 dimensions	9 dimensions
		power distance		power		power distance
	time-orientation	short- and long-term orientation	monochronic-polychronic		sequential/parallel time orientation	future orientation
		individualism/collectivism			collectivism-individualism	group collectivism
						institutional collectivism
		masculinity/femininity				gender equality
						assertiveness
		uncertainty avoidance		tradition		uncertainty avoidance
				safety		
				achievement		achievement orientation
		self-restraint/indulgence		stimulation		
				hedonism		
	human nature			benevolence		human orientation
	relationship orientation					
	human-nature (supernatural) relationship			universalism	nature control: inner or outer	
				adaptation	universalism-particularism	
	activity orientation		fast and slow messages	self-control	neutral-emotional	
			space		specific or diffuse relationships	
			high and low context		acquired/inherited position	
Method and sample context	Quantitative questionnaire-based survey, qualitative interviews	Quantitative questionnaire-based survey (some 116,000 IBM employees)	Qualitative open interviews (180 business employees and managers)	Questionnaire-based quantitative research	Quantitative scale (15,000 corporate employees)	Quantitative questionnaires, analysis of qualitative data with the participation of 62 countries

Table 3 Overview of the dimensions of cultural comparative researches based on Fink et al, 2004, author's compilation

2.2 MEETING OF CULTURES

In the field of intercultural management, cultural researches were classified into international comparisons, intercultural interactions and multi-cultural researches (Sackmann és Philips, 2004). The research providing the basis of the thesis chose intercultural interactions as the medium of the research, that make it possible to identify cultural discrepancies in the context of cultural research, but the discrepancies themselves are already regarded as the interaction of cultures. According to Barinaga (1998) the cultural specifics of the parties to the interaction evolve through the interaction of their cultures. The encounter of cultures can be considered a source of conflicts if individuals coming from different cultures carry the basic assumptions of their respective cultures and their differences may lead to conflicts between the parties (Soderberg and Holden, 2002). The main characteristic of intercultural situations is that they involve the meeting of persons socialised in different cultures, whose acts are therefore determined by the values and norms that are typical of their own culture and are unknown to the other party (Thomas, 1996). Typically, in the situations under study people from different cultures interact and, therefore, the research targets the culture-specific effects of such psychologically relevant processes impacting on behaviour as information processing, perception, evaluation, decision-making and emotions.

The meeting of cultures is a highly complex situation; many factors play a role in understanding it. The theories presented below introduce the processes occurring when members of two cultures meet, for the sake of most extensive understanding of the research material.

The chapter first discusses the difficulties of integration into an alien culture, then the factors promoting the integration process.

2.2.1 Difficulties of integration into a foreign culture

2.2.1.1 Intercultural communication

The field of intercultural communication strengthened during the development of cultural theories in the previous century, and it unified the results of linguistics, cultural anthropology, psychology and communication in a postmodern, diverse discipline. Its

founders include Hall, Kluckhohn, Hofstede and Trompenaars. The main doctrine of intercultural communication is that cultures are different from each other and can be distinguished from each other. Culture and communication are inseparable phenomena. The representatives of cultures communicate in a special way in the given form of communication. Therefore, belonging to the same culture makes communication easier; belonging to different cultures makes it more difficult (Niedermüller, 2001).

According to the interpretation of intercultural communication, the primary, implicit, level of culture includes the rules known and applied by everyone. The secondary level of culture includes the existing rules and assumptions, the grammar of the culture, which is not shared with outsiders. The tertiary level of culture is explicit culture, visible also to the outsider, the level of social rites, traditional clothing, the national cuisine and holidays.

Cross-cultural communication can be divided into (1) international business communication, referring to communication between members of ethnically different nations, countries, states and corporations. (2) Intercultural communication, referring to the interaction of two cultures, communication between the members of ethnically different nations, countries, states and corporations. In the course of intercultural communication, the communicating parties create a common culture when their different cultures interact and they accept and cooperate with each other. (4) Multicultural communication, referring to communication between the members of more than two ethnically different nations, countries, states and corporations. (5) Interethnic communication refers to communication between ethnic groups within the same culture or ethnic groups smaller than a country, a nation or a state. (6) In exolingual communication native and non-native speakers of the same language communicate with each other (Lázár, 2011).

In case of pragmatic failures (Thomas, 1983, one of the most prominent researchers of this phenomenon prefers this term to ‘errors’) the users of the language — while following the grammar rules of the language — do not say the thing they intend to. Pragmatic failures usually happen when the parties speak the same language, but come from different cultural backgrounds (they adhere to different communication patterns because of their different regional, religious or social groups). So, in case of pragmatic failure, we do not understand, or misunderstand the speaker. Socio-pragmatic failures

stem from the language learner's incomplete knowledge of the customs of the target culture and its social expectations. If the value system of their own culture differs from that of the target culture, then the rules of language behavior to be followed are closely related to the language-related beliefs and worldview of the user's own culture. Thomas distinguished four groups of pragmatic failures: (1) the different ranges of freely-accessible and other things in everyday life, (2) taboos, (3) difference in the signs of social distance and of power and (4) discrepancies in worldviews and value hierarchies (Thomas, 1983 cited by Maróti, 2013).

According to Tong You (2008), the ability of intercultural communication is an umbrella which covers the individual's cognitive, emotional and behavioral abilities during intercultural communication. Intercultural sensitivity is the emotional aspect of the ability of intercultural communication, and it measures to the ability of people to engage with the cultural differences and their understanding.

Culture and communication are inseparable phenomena. The ability of intercultural communication and intercultural sensitivity promote the better understanding of the communication of members of the two cultures.

2.2.1.2 Factors hindering integration

Integration can only be realized in a culturally heterogeneous environment if the employee can fulfill his own potential and, moreover, is also able to cooperate with his workmates in the new environment. The success or failure of integration[11] is attributed to different and diverse causes by the relevant theories, to be presented in the section below.

Fülöp and Sebestyén (2011) collected the obstacles and challenges individuals residing in a foreign culture in the long term must face:

- ✓ general overload due to changes, which stems from the simultaneous change of everything at the same time, giving you the feeling that you are losing your footholds (Hess-Linderman, 2002).
- ✓ linguistic and communication difficulties (Ward-Kennedy, 1996),

[11] The failure of postings is indicated by the Expatriate Failure Rate.

- ✓ unknown customs and norms (Church, 1982),
- ✓ possible financial difficulties (Opper et al., 1990),
- ✓ perceived and actual racial discrimination (Church, 1982),
- ✓ different climate (McLachlan-Justice, 2009).

In his study of expatriate workers, Tung (1987) identified seven factors that may cause failure[12]:

- ✓ employee cannot adapt to the new environment (due to geographical, meteorological, cultural differences),
- ✓ due to their personality or emotional immaturity
- ✓ they cannot adapt to the responsibilities of the new job,
- ✓ their technical competences are insufficient,
- ✓ they lack motivation,
- ✓ their spouse cannot adapt to the new environment,
- ✓ or they have other family-related problems.

According to Black and Gregersen (1999), failure is seldom due to lack of knowledge and skills; psychological factors such as inability to handle stressful situation, to communicate with people coming from a different culture or the low ability of the family to adapt to a new environment are more likely causes.

A conflict between two individuals or social groups with different cultural backgrounds is considered a cross-cultural conflict. This does not necessarily imply a conflict between societies. Even individuals from the same society are parts of different groups based on family relations, language, ethnics or religion (Avruch, 1998).

From the point of view of the research, the most frequent likely causes hindering integration are general overload due to changes, linguistic and communication difficulties and unknown customs and standards.

[12] I did not rank the list on the basis of the author's research results, but separated the factors referring to expatriate workers themselves and their families, respectively, for better understanding.

2.2.1.3 Stress

The expression “stress” is used for unpleasant stimuli causing various physiological, behavioural and subjective response reactions. According to today’s interpretations, this is not only about special external stimuli (situative definition) or typical template responses (definition built on reactions), but rather about the special relationship of the individual and the outside world. “Psychological stress is the connection between the individual and his environment which is significant from the point of view of his health, and coping with it impacts on, maybe overburdens his health” (Krohne, 1990).

Those events can be considered stressful which in our view threaten our physical and spiritual wellbeing. The events themselves are called stressors, and the reactions given to them are called stress responses (Atkinson&Hilgard, 2005).

The relevant literature interprets the term “stress” in two ways: external effect exerted on the biological entity or changes triggered in the body by external circumstances (Juhász, 2002). Stress research has used various stress definitions and that has contributed to the ambiguity of the concept (Le Fevre and Kolt, 2010, Jex, Beehr and Roberts, 1992, Kahn and Byosiere, 1992).

The concept of psychic stress originates from the field of biology. Cannon (1922) was the first to note the emergency reaction when the adrenal gland supports the reactions of coping and escaping bye excreting adrenalin[13]. Selye (1936) was the first to define stress as “non-specific response given by the biological organism to various impacts” (Cooper-Williams, 1996).

Selye (1956) created the model of the General Adaptation Syndrome based on the researches of Bernard and Cannon (1935) for the “non-specific component” of stress response.

[13]“The stimuli, the “stressors” getting from the hypothalamus to the hypophysis mobilize the corticoids of the adrenal cortex via the adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH), which corticoids increase the energy sources (with proteins, minerals) of the body. If necessary, they prepare the body for coping or escaping by releasing larger amounts of adrenalin or noradrenalin into the blood (Atkinson&Hilgard, 2005).

Selye (1976) distinguished three degrees of the reactions generated by impacts threatening the human organism. The first stage is the alarm reaction, i.e. the status of alert. The body prepares for the danger and its resistance is decreasing. In case of long-term stressors, the second stage of the model is reached (resistance), when the resistance of the body is increasing and it is adapting to the external impact. The energy used for the adaptation experiments is limited, thus the third level is that of exhaustion. This occurs if the stressor impact lasts so long that it is unbearable for the person exposed to it. The alarm reaction recurs and it may cause several diseases or even death (Selye, 1976). Stress, at the same time, also challenges us to see whether we are able to cope with the difficulties in life. Consequently, stress is only pathological if we cannot handle the new, threatening situation, or if the individual gets to the stage of exhaustion, which has a harmful effect.

The model has been criticised by many as it is very difficult to understand that the pattern of responses to stressors is identical in each and every case. According to researches, there are huge individual differences in the responses of the body, and it has been demonstrated that this model cannot be applied to all stressors experienced by people (Kopp, 2008). Nevertheless, Selye earned imperishable merits by being the first to model the stress process.

Richard Lazarus designed the most effective general stress model, in which (Lazarus and Launier, 1978, Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, Lazarus, 1991) he pointed out the role of the balance of the requirements and the available resources, while banking upon the inner processes of the individual (Selye, 1956) and even on external events (Holmes and Rahe, 1967). During the primary assessment of the situation, the individual decides whether the event implies damage, danger or challenge that had occurred already. During secondary assessment, the individual tries to determine the available coping options. These coping options may be resources or responses (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). The so-called interactional or transactional model implies that the potential coping options could strongly influence whether the individual would consider the same situation stressful in the future, and he may also change his decision. Stress occurs in the model when the requirements exceed the available resources, whereas in a reverse case the situation would probably be considered a challenge. Coping may target the problem itself or ourselves and the emotions triggered by the situation (Ross and Altmaier, 1994).

Irrespective of the chosen coping strategy, the process is transactional, since it affects the qualification of the stressor. Thus the interaction between the person and his environment triggers stress in the individual (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, quoted in Szilas 2011).

Holmes and Rahe (1967) developed the classic concept of stressful life events. Some events signal or trigger significant changes in the individual's life. The stressor events can be assigned to the following categories: (1) traumatic events beyond the regular boundaries of human experience, (2) events that cannot be influenced and predicted, (3) events challenging our capabilities and self-concept. According to Holmes and Rahe a significant part of stress originates from the accumulation of these life events. These can be classified into the following categories: (events challenging our capabilities and self-concept)

- ✓ Traumatic events: natural disasters, catastrophes caused by man.
- ✓ Suggestibility: perception of how an individual can influence an event and how he experiences it (for example the death of a beloved person, dismissal from the workplace).
- ✓ Predictability: prediction of a foreseeable stressful event decreases the severity of stress even if the person cannot influence it.
- ✓ Tests: obstacles faced by the individual.
- ✓ Internal conflicts: conflicts taking place in the individual.
- ✓ Independence or dependence: tension of belonging to or breaking up with someone.
- ✓ Intimate relationship or solitude: relationship problems or tension developed just because of the lack of this relationship.
- ✓ The desire to stand out from/merge into the community and its failure.
- ✓ Internal tension caused by inhibited emotions, thoughts, desires.

The amount of stress thus depends by individual in function of his assessment that the events are out of control, unpredictable, exceed his capabilities or are incompatible with his self-concept. Thus the events become stressful depending on how we assess them (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

The results of Holmes and Masuda (1974) clearly indicated that health damage significantly increases with the increase of the number of life events. Besides the psychological experience of stress (sadness, anger, wrath, general dissatisfaction,

depression), a series of physical reaction also appear, such as fatigue, muscle tension, pain, stomach complaints or general physical discomfort.

The life events model has been criticised by many over the years. The critiques highlighted the data collection problems, the dilemmas of the direction of causal effects and the difficulties of measuring stress effects (Paykel, 1983 cited by Szilas, 2011). A further weakness of the model of Holmes and Rahe is that it cannot filter out life events that are the consequences and not the causes of some diseases; consequently, their methods of data collection and evaluation cannot be verified scientifically (Paykel, 1983). The individuality of people, the particularities of personal perception and coping cannot be ignored in the research of stress.

Vulnerability and incapacity are among the strongest sources of stress; they can lead to experiencing a crisis. In Caplan's (1964) (cited by Bakó, 2002) words, the individual experiences a crisis when he has to face events that jeopardize his mental balance, that also become crucial in his life, where his usual coping methods are ineffective.

If the body loses its state of equilibrium and is forced to adapt, a series of reactions is triggered that leads to defense. According to Janoff - Bulman (1992) and Tedeschi – Calhoun (2004), in these cases the individual questions his assumptions regarding the kindness, predictability, controllability of the world, security, his identity and the future.

By "coping with stress" we mean the individual's deliberate, continuously changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to overcome any external threats which in his opinion exceed his resources (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). According to Lazarus' approach, personal perception, assessment and decisions have especially big significance in the process of coping with stress.

Stressors can have positive or negative consequences for the individual (Szondy, 2010; Fogarasy, 2010; Csikszentmihályi, 1997). According to Selye (1956), the ultimate result depends on the speed and length of the necessary adaptation, i.e. he firmly believed in the distinction of (1) eustress and (2) distress. In case there is no chance to rely on existing capabilities (Juhász, 2002) or harmful and unpleasant consequences arise, we speak of distress (Salavecz, 2008, Grote and Clark, 2001). We call it eustress when the external requirements facing the individual lead to self-fulfillment and to the utilization

of important personal traits (Juhász, 2002) which then have advantageous and desirable consequences (Le Fevre et al., 2006 cited by Szilas, 2011). According to Lovallo (2000) the triggers of distress can be failure, loss of control and negative emotions, while those of eustress are success, control and positive emotions.

At the end of the 1980s, besides the prevention and defense mechanisms, researchers started to deal more with the concept of struggling, coping (Hárdi, 1987, Holahan-Moos, 1987, Schwarzer, 1990). According to the classical analytical concept, coping means the curing of external threats by the ego. There is a difference between coping and prevention: the first is conscious, the latter is unconscious.

Lazarus (1966) writes about the three interrelated processes of the trauma experience: primary and secondary assessment and coping. Primary assessment involves the perception of the threat, while in the course of secondary assessment the individual chooses the method from the available possibilities by which he thinks he can avoid the threat. The third element of the experience is coping, i.e. executing the chosen action (Carver and Scheier, 2006), in the course of which the individual tries confront stress (Smith and Bem, 1994).

According to Herman (2003) an event becomes special not because it happens rarely, but because it exceeds the individual's everyday adaptation capacity. According to Herman, job loss, personal family crises, existential breakdown can all become traumatizing factors since these are life events that the persons cannot deal with.

Pennebaker (2005) describes the constriction as defense mechanism like a decreased way of thinking and "dulling". One fundamental assumption of Pennebaker's theory was that giving a meaning is a basic human need, therefore suppressing emotions and inhibiting the free expression of emotions ruins the health of the body and the soul (Pennebaker, 1982). According to him the active retention/inhibition of a person's thoughts and emotions requires hard work from the body and gradually undermines its protective ability. Like other stress factors, inhibition ruins the immune functions, the operation of the cardiovascular system and also the biochemical systems of the brain and the nervous system. Facing the deepest thoughts and emotions can trigger short- or long-term health improvement for the participants of the writing therapy methodology.

Confessions made in writing or orally can neutralize most of the problems caused by inhibition (Pennebaker 1982).

Life events challenging your capabilities and self-image may cause stress (Holmes and Rahe, 1967). The amount of stress thus depends by individual in function of his assessment that the events are out of control, unpredictable, exceed his capabilities or are incompatible with his self-concept (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Vulnerability and incapacity are among the strongest sources of stress (Caplan, 1964 quoted in Bakó, 2002). According to Pennebaker, giving a meaning is a basic human need, therefore suppressing of emotions and inhibiting the free expression of emotions ruins the health of body and soul. Confessions made in writing or orally can neutralize most of the problems caused by inhibition (Pennebaker 1982).

2.2.1.4 The cultural shock phenomenon

"Cultural shock[14] is a psychological disorientation that the individual feels in the course of integration to a foreign culture due to losing the familiar signs and symbols. During the shock the decision-making capacity and judgment and consequently also his efficiency in the foreign culture decreases; therefore, successful integration requires to process the effects of the shock." (Vörös, 1998)

Oberg (1954) was the first to use the term "cultural shock" for the state full of anxiety when an individual integrating into a new environment feels surprised, distracted and uncertain. He defined the term as an occupational disease experienced by persons on a mission abroad[15], since it had a cause that could be diagnosed and also visible symptoms (Oberg, 1960). Its physical symptoms include sleep disturbance, pain, allergy and its psychic symptoms are melancholy, lack of confidence, inability to solve problems (Guanipa, 1998). Oberg's theoretical assumption was accepted by the relevant literature: these are the symptoms that are typical of those experiencing a cultural shock, and this is the individuals' natural response to getting into a new environment, but later researches

[14]The literature uses both the expression of "cultural shock" and of "culture shock" without definition-level distinction. I decided to use the term "cultural shock".
[15] Oberg examined North American expatriates working is Brazil.

put the emphasis on whether awareness of experiencing such a situation made the individual capable of adaptation (Black and Mendenhall, 1991, Winkelman, 2003). Going beyond the disease approach of Oberg, Craig (1979) in his book "1001 stress-producing differences" processed the environmental effects bearing on the individual and the perceived physical, psychological and stress symptoms that may be encountered by the individual during integration into a new culture, and may determine his behaviour (flight, cultural empathy, goes native) and his integration tactic (encapsulator, cosmopolitan, absconder) in the new culture.

Furnham and Bochner (1982) defined the following potential attitude reactions to a foreign culture at the individual level. (1) disappearance, acculturation: the individual gives up his own cultural identity and masters and exercises the norms of the new culture. (2) chauvinism: rejects the new culture and over-estimates the values and norms of the original culture. (3) marginal attitude: accepts the norms and values of both cultures, but uncertain as to which one to choose. He considers the two cultures incompatible. (4) mediator attitude: the individual can synthesize and accept the cultural differences.

The stage theories of cultural shock follow the psychological changes taking place in the individual entering a foreign culture. The following are typical: sense of loss caused by losing the familiar environment, frustration, disappointment, dysfunction of personal and social communication, uncertainty regarding events experienced in the new culture. The models of cultural shock represent the stages of encounter with and integration into an alien culture experienced with fluctuating emotions. The authors segmented and labelled these stages differently.

The so called U-curve representation identifying the four stages is associated with the name of Lysgaard (1955), and it shows the individual's emotional statuses when encountering a foreign culture. Integration into a foreign culture: (1) honeymoon, (2) cultural shock, (3) adaptation, (4) acceptance/getting to know the new culture. The stages of the process and the U-curve representation can be seen in Figure 4 (Black and Mendenhall, 1991). At the beginning of the encounter with the foreign culture, in the stage called (1) honeymoon, the individual considers the new experiences interesting and exciting and he is under the impact of new experiences. In this careless period he usually makes only superficial relationships with the members and the public administration of the other culture. In the next stage, which is the (2) period of the cultural shock, the

individual identifies the differences between his own and the foreign culture, manifesting themselves for him in the differences of the basic assumptions, norms, beliefs and customs. Besides administering official matters, the person also establishes deeper relationships and touches deeper layers of communication with the members of the new culture. By accepting these differences and learning the techniques of dealing effectively with the challenges of the new environment and understanding the basic assumptions of the new culture, the individual steps into integration stage (3). In the last period of time spent in the foreign culture, the individual knows and accepts the customs and norms of the other culture (4), his problem-solving skills suitable for being used in the new culture are upgraded and his emotions concerning it get stabilized.

Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) concluded that returning to the original culture shows similar processes to those that can be observed when integrating to the foreign culture and added that stage to the above. The model interpreting the phenomenon of cultural shock in eight stages, supplementing the U-model, was given the name of W-curve. The first four stages were thus supplemented with stages (5) honeymoon, (6) reverse cultural shock, (7) reintegration, (8) total acceptance of own culture. The individual experiences a joyful and happy period of time when returning to his own culture: this will be stage (5), his honeymoon period. In stage (6) of the reverse cultural shock the individual recalls the experiences and customs related to the other culture more and more frequently and he also discovers elements in his own culture that he had not dealt with deliberately before and feels an outsider. In the course of stage (7), reintegration, the individual identifies again the basic assumptions and values of his culture and (8) completely accepts them.

The researches of Black and Mendenhall (1991) fit into the theoretical framework of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory that focuses rather on the integration of the individual and its details. Black and Mendenhall adopted the adaptation stage boundaries of this theory, using the following stages: (1) honeymoon, (2) culture shock, (3) integration, (4) maturity.

The theoretical criticisms of cultural shock can be divided into two groups. They miss either the methodological grounding and empirical confirmation of the theory (Sussman, 2002, Kealey, 1989) or they do not agree with the approach to cultural integration (Ward and Kennedy, 1996, Bochner, 1986). The first propose more extensive

research instead of small samples (Sussman, 2002, Kealey, 1989), while the latter would change the approach and treat the process rather as learning and fulfillment (Ward and Kennedy, 1996), a positive opportunity (Bochner, 1986).

In the opinion of Hofsede (1994), the cultural shock theory tries to see the individual's encounter with an alien culture and integration into it as a single process, without considering the situational factors that determine the context of the individual's integration (Shelby and Woods, 1966, Golden, 1973). These include personality traits, perceptions, values learned during socialization (Rieger and Wong-Rieger, 1991, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985), learning methods (Porter-Tansky, 1999), motivation (Brett et al., 1992), communication (Cox, 2004), individual expectations (Hyder and Lövblad, 2007, Black, 1992), relationships with family and friends (Punnett, 1997), workplace conditions and cultural distances in the original and the new culture (Janssens, 1995).

		Meeting a new culture: the beginning		The cultural shock stage	The stage of accepting the new culture		Return home
Oberg (1960)		CULTURAL SHOCK					
Lysgaard (1955)		honeymoon		cultural shock	adaptation	acceptance	
Galahorn and Galahorn (1963)		honeymoon		cultural shock	adaptation	acceptance	honeymoon
							reverse cultural shock
							reintegration
							total acceptance of own culture
Rhinesmith (1985)		initial anxiety	initial cultural shock	depression-frustration	reception of the host culture	recurrent anxiety	recurrent enthusiasm
		initial enthusiasm	superficial attunement				recurrent shock
							reintegration
Black and Mendenhall (1991)		honeymoon		cultural shock	integration	maturity	
Brett et al. (1992)		enthusiasm and optimism		frustration	gradual habituation		
Hofstede (1994)		enthusiasm and euphoria		actual cultural shock	acculturation	stabilization phase	
Punett (1997)	before delegation	early stage of delegation		late stage of delegation			period of time after delegation
Winkelman (2003)		honeymoon		crisis	adaptation	adaptation, acculturation	
Csáth (2007)		beginning of the relationship	actual cultural shock	superficial adaptation	learning, integration		autonomy, independence
				depression, segregation			

Table 4 Stage boundaries of the cultural shock by author, author's compilation

The models of Hoopes (1981), Adler (1991) and Bennett (1998) describe the stages of the management of cultural differences. They distinguish two main stages: the (1) ethnocentric stage, when the individual presumes that everyone has the same worldview, i.e. they contemplate the world in the same way; and the (2) ethno-relative stage, when the individual accepts the existence of cultural differences and can also use them.

The stages of the models start out from the assumption that organisational culture and time-tested processes are independent of culture, i.e. they are identical everywhere and there is no need to consider the differences. They attribute the worries due to cultural differences to environmental, structural or political factors (Brannen, 1992). In the next stages, the organization recognizes that there are differences originating from culture, but considers them mostly problem sources and hindrances to efficiency. The organization finally considers cultural diversity a competitive edge, to be realized at subsidiary and headquarters levels by deliberate planning. Therefore, they consider it important for the expatriates to have skills that will let them work even across cultural boundaries.

Author	Stage						
	Ethnocentric			Ethno-relative			
Hoopes (1981)	Ethnocentrism	Raising awareness	Understanding	Acceptance	Valuing, appreciation	Selective adaptation	Adaptation
Adler (1991)	Disregard	Minimization		Exploitation			
Bennett (1998)	Denial	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation	Integration	
What the organisation thinks of cultural differences in the given stage:	Differences exist irrespective of culture, everywhere, no need to consider them.	Some differences derive from culture, but they mostly have to be dealt with as sources of conflict.		Cultural diversity is a competitive edge to be realized by deliberate planning.			

Table 5 Phases of the treatment of cultural differences by author, author's compilation

Oberg (1954) was the first to use the term “cultural shock” for the state full of anxiety when an individual integrating into a new environment feels surprised, distracted and uncertain. The individual integrating into a new culture may respond by giving up his own cultural identity and mastering and exercising the norms of the new culture. It may also happen that he rejects the new culture, or adopts a marginal attitude, accepting the norms and values of both cultures, but being uncertain as to which one to choose. Finally, he may assume a mediator attitude and synthesize and accept the cultural differences (Furnham és Bochner, 1982). The so-called U-curve represents the emotional state of the individual meeting a new culture. The stages concerned are called honeymoon, cultural shock, integration and acceptance (Black és Mendenhall, 1991).

2.2.2 Factors promoting integration into an alien culture

“It is a milestone in the emergence and developing of one’s intercultural competency when one realises that cultural differences imply no ranking.” (Hidasi, 2008)

In his researches analyzing the key factors of success of expatriate staff, Flynn (1995) came up with three decisive factors: (1) intercultural adjustment skills; (2) professional, technical and managerial capabilities, skills, and (3) stability and adjustment capacity of the family.

In the opinion of Porter and Tansky (1999), the expatriate worker should be learning-oriented in the first place, and also capable of reviewing his situation in case of failure and solving the task ever by choosing a new strategy.

Dessler (2000) grouped the characteristics of expatriates required for success at the workplace abroad. For example: (1) work experience, motivation and dedication to learning. (2) Social capital, i.e. how easily the employee establishes contacts with others. (3) Flexibility, i.e. the traits needed for adaptation, and (4) open-mindedness (interest in the things going on in the world, search for novelty). A further important factor is (5) family situation (adaptation to the family or getting independent of it).

The theories are similar in that they consider it most important for the expatriate to have qualities and competencies promoting his integration into and consequently efficiency (also) in the new environment.

If the individual had already got in touch with other cultures outside his employee role (for example via family, friends, and university exchange programs) and/or he has had foreign work experience, these can also help him develop and upgrade competencies promoting faster integration.

Schneider and Barsoux (1997) identified nine intercultural competency elements:

1. Interpersonal skills that promote integration into the life of the host country and the establishment of personal relations.
2. Language skills, which means learning the local language of the recipient country. If full knowledge of a foreign language is not feasible, even basic-level communication skills carry a positive message.
3. Cultural curiosity may be the driving force of the expatriate's delegation, since it means openness to new experiences in the other culture.
4. The ability to tolerate uncertainty helps the expatriate balance the rapidly changing environment and unpredictable behaviour of employees there.
5. Flexibility makes the expatriate able to adjust his decisions dynamically to the changing of circumstances.
6. The competencies of patience and respect make the expatriate able to accept the customs of the foreign culture and cope with its pace.
7. Cultural empathy helps the expatriate imagine himself as the member of the other culture and use this insight to treat it at the level of understanding.
8. With help of strong self-consciousness he can get in touch with another person or culture without the fear of losing his identity.
9. The sense of humor helps the expatriate process the frustrations of everyday happenings. As long as he is able to understand and use humour also in the new culture, he can understand a deeper layer of culture.

According to Dessler (2000) the main pillar of successful placement abroad consists of five building blocks. (1) Work experience and motivation, (2) social capital, (3) flexibility/adaptability, (4) cultural openness and (5) family situation. His further researches brought the following results concerning the required characteristics of the employee: (1) sensitive to cultural differences, curious and interested, (2) has outstanding professional competence, (3) persistent, risk-taking, consistent, (4) motivates others, (5)

success oriented, (6) gives feedback as a leader and expects feedback from others, (7) open to criticism, (8) flexible, good problem solver.

In their research, Popovski – Popovska – Jovcheska (2014) were looking for the crucial factors of successful delegation. They identified the following: (1) aptitude, (2) ability to deal with conflicts, (3) ability to deal with ambiguity, (4) discretion, (5) the family's contact with the foreign culture, (6) the integration of the family, (7) the personal integration of the family members, (8) complete integration of the family members.

Dowling and his workmates (1999) consider it important to develop the expatriates' competencies in three stages: (1) before delegation, (2) during delegation, and (3) after delegation. The objective of intercultural training is to develop and practise skills that can be used in everyday life (Bennett, Aston, Colquhoun, 2000). According to Dessler (2000), the function of (1) preparatory training is to prepare the employee for the cultural differences and the consequent behavioral differences. Besides the knowledge of characteristics and customs of the foreign culture, knowing the protocol and learning the local language are also important. During (2) delegation, the emphasis is on maintaining the knowledge level acquired before delegation. The family plays an important role in the success of the expatriate's delegation; therefore it is absolutely necessary for them to also participate in intercultural training and get support both in the preparation phase and during their stay abroad. Summarizing newly acquired knowledge and skills after delegation (3) enhances the professional development of the employee as well as the common knowledge of the corporation.

The intercultural adjustment of the individual and the adaptation capacity of the family are indispensable for the successful integration of the individual (Flynn, 1995). The pillars of expatriate employment are motivation, social capital and cultural openness (Dessler, 2000).

3 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This chapter presents the empirical part of the thesis. I structured the methodological introduction of the empirical part of the thesis based on the logics of Krippendorff (1989, 2003) and Miles & Huberman (1994).

The research planning stage presents my position as a researcher, that is, the epistemological perspective (foundations of scientific theory and organizational theory), together with the research questions (and sub-questions). The possible distortions of the research are also covered there.

In the data collection and preliminary data analysis stage, I present first the data collection process. I introduce the background of the data collection methodology (quantitative and qualitative methods) and my choice of the method of data analysis (qualitative content analysis). This is followed by the description of the identification of the observation units and of the sampling method (interview methodology in practice) then, after the presentation of the basic data of the sample under study (detailed description of the interviewees), the methodology of collecting and recording data is specified. Finally, the preliminary data analysis is detailed and I sum up my ideas concerning the validity of the research.

The section on end results includes the final data analysis, the end results and the conclusions.

3.1 RESEARCH PLANNING

3.1.1 Theoretical framework of the research

Differences in the theories of understanding/knowing cultures reveal marked diversity already in the definition of the topics of the relevant research. Cultural researches differ not only in the questions they ask, but also in their research goal and methods. The frameworks of thinking representing the bases of cultural researches may also differ, but they can be grouped into certain schools. In what follows, I will present the theoretical frameworks of such researches and conclude by stating my own researcher position.

Research in terms of paradigms is the most widespread organisation theory framework. Its basis is provided by the concept of the paradigm as defined by Kuhn (1970, 1984, 2002)[16], i.e. a general approach and typical theoretical framework reflecting fundamental beliefs and convictions about the essence of organizational reality (ontology), the nature of organizational knowledge (epistemology), human nature and the feasibility of studying these phenomena (methodology) (Gelei, 2002).

Researches aiming at understanding cultures thus think in different paradigms and, consequently, researchers may ask different research questions and answer them by different research methodologies.

In the field of intercultural management, Sackmann and Philips (2004) classified the theoretical frameworks of the studies as follows: (1) international comparisons, (2) intercultural interaction and (3) multicultural research. The cultural researches presented in the theoretical section of this thesis belong to this block including many theories.

The matrix designed by Burrell and Morgan (1979) to study social and organisational reality distinguishes four paradigms (functionalist, interpretative, radical structuralist, radical humanist). The horizontal axis of the Burell-Morgan matrix represents the dimension of science philosophy, which classifies organization theories on the basis of the assumption of the subjective or objective nature of (organizational) reality. The vertical axis represents the dimension of social theory, with "sociology of regulation" at one end-point and "sociology of radical change" at the other (Burell and Morgan, 1979). The researches are dominated by the functionalist framework of thinking; the interpretive paradigm is also visible, but researches in the remaining two paradigms are definitely in minority (Gioa and Pitre, 1990).

In the literature on organisation theory, Tsoukas-Knudsen (2003), Deetz (1996), Denzin-Lincoln (1994), Guba – Lincoln (2005) and Kelemen and Rumens (2008) proposed further paradigm groups. The (re)interpretation of paradigms is an ongoing process (Romani et al., 2012, Hassard and Cox, 2013, Shepherd – Challenger, 2013).

Primecz et al. (2009) interpreted the grouping applied in intercultural management as the theoretical framework of organisation theory researches. They found that almost all intercultural researches would be conceivable in almost any paradigm.

[16] Kuhn wanted to make statements about natural science, but the social sciences have also adopted his concept almost without criticism.

Hidegh (2015) believes that the theoretical bases of the mainstream researches presented above are "captives" of the Burrell-Morgan matrix in the sense that, as a starting point, they interpret the researches in the light of the dimensions of the matrix. Consequently, the specifics on the non-mainstream theories that cannot be described in terms of the matrix are relegated into the background and remain unlit.

One of these theories is critical realism relying on the theoretical bases of social philosophy and occupying an interim position between the paradigm-based constructivist and positivist traditions (Hidegh – Gelei – Primecz, 2014).

Critical management theories (Clegg, 2005, Reed, 2009, Scherer, 2009, Thompson – O'Doherty, 2009) are similar in that they express social criticism, profess the principle of denaturalisation, and they are against the principle of performance, and include reflexivity and power as central topics (Hidegh – Gelei – Primecz, 2014, Hidegh, 2015).

Similarly to the functionalist or positivist paradigms generating general rules based on the observed phenomena and aiming ultimately at understanding "objective" knowledge that is independent of the observer, the method and any circumstances (Primecz, 1999), critical realists also assume the existence of objective reality that is independent of the researcher and any other individual (Lawson, 1989 quoted in Primecz, 1999). Critical realism focuses on the exploration of the latent causal relations, the hidden, non-observable mechanisms that drive the world. The goal is to understand and explain how and why things happen as they do and not in some other way. That is, the ontological objectivism of critical realism assumes that there are hidden underlying structures and relationships with causal power and a potential for shaping the phenomena on the surface (Reed, 2009 idézi Hidegh, 2015).

The physical and the social world are thus understandable and finding the relevant knowledge is the mission of the researchers (Primecz, 1999). The position of critical realism is that, contrary to the positivist paradigm, research findings are inevitably influenced by the subjectivity of the researcher which, in turn, produces many different versions of the social reality that exists independent of the researcher (Reed, 2009 quoted by Hidegh, 2015).

Criteria		Features of critical realism
Ontology	What is reality?	General social-organizational regularities (structures)
Image of people	What is the nature of human activity like?	Commonly created and accepted collective reality ("action").
Epistemology	How to seize knowledge?	The research/researcher is always value-driven and biased.
Methodology	How to acquire knowledge?	Typical methods: in-depth interview and observation of participants.

Table 6 Philosophy-of-science features of critical realism. Based on Gelei (2012) and Hidegh (2015), author's compilation

According to Baert (quoted in Primecz, 1999), reality has various levels. (1) The actual level includes the states of events and things. (2) The empirical level is suitable for the observation of the actual level. (3) The in-depth level is where the structures and mechanisms governing the events are located.

In the opinion of realists, the observable facts and the deep structure are not in synchrony; therefore, the aim of scientific investigation must be the explanation of the underlying mechanisms that are the drivers of events at the actual level (Lawson, quoted in Primecz, 1999).

Critical realists therefore assume that the subject matter of the research acts independent of the researcher; the structures of social reality are objectively given and affect his identity and behaviour, but social-economic systems are being created in a social (collective) construction process (Duberley – Johnson, 2009 quoted by Hidegh, 2015). In the absence of knowledge concerning the driving forces located deep down, observations might be misleading; therefore, research should focus on understanding the driving forces.

3.1.2 Critical realist reading of my researcher stance

The original goal of the research was to investigate the differences between the two cultures by using the results of previous cultural researches, that is, I assumed that the differences concerned can be unveiled and the factors shaping culture can be understood. However, at the start of the research (during the test interviews), I realized that the interviewees, while talking about the cultural differences, also gave their own interpretations of the actions of members of the other culture. The interviewees interpreted the background of the interactions based on their own values and perceptions. This means that the interviewees used their own system of value assessment (not that of previous culture research models) to assess and interpret the drivers behind the actions. This made me realize that, because of my own previous experiences of South Korean culture, I can only interpret the results of the research through my personal "filter".

I considered the differences of the two cultures explorable, but I assumed during the research that it is possible to understand the difference created through the subjective and value-driven realities of the interviewees and the researcher.

Another question was how I would look at the interpretations of the results of cultural researches at the end of my research. The value-free, fact-based approach of objective researches requires the fulfillment of the criteria of generalisable and reproducible research. In researches adopting a subjective approach, the research experience is provided by the research subjects' personal insights and the analysis of their interpretations, which will hardly produce the same outcome in every case; that is, it can be considered valid only at a particular place, in that situation. It should be noted that Primecz et al. (2011) assume that in case of a properly execute research project, other researchers may produce similar results in their own researches. According to Romani et al. (2001), there is continuity between such interpretations, even though they are not identical.

During the research I had to exercise continuous self-reflection, to distinguish my subjective perceptions from the experiences of the interviewees, and to prevent loss and modification of information due to the interference of my own interpretations. Therefore, at the beginning of the research, I set myself the following guideline based on Gelei (2002): to continuously seek self-reflection to minimize my personal data survey and analysis. "The validity of the method and the interpretation can be demonstrated through the thorough reconstruction of the way which led us there." (Mason, 2005) I recorded the

research steps during the formulation of the end results and the conclusions, to make the research documentation traceable and reproducible. The research results are supplemented by an adequate amount of interview citations to show also contradictions and other-than-average ideas. This increases the credibility of the research by demonstrating that the researcher works form the recorded research material instead of recording his own thoughts (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

3.1.3 Research areas and research questions

The goal of the present research is to answer the predefined research questions raised by the researcher. I assigned research question promoting analysis to each research area. The questions are mappings of the research goals (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Research questions can be answered with the help of conclusions based on data obtained from the research interviews (Krippendorff, 2003).

When choosing the data survey method of the research, it is essential to know the applicability features of each method because they have great influence on the research results. That is, the data collection method impacts also on the feasibility of their analysis. The aim of the quantitative method is generalization (Lehota et al, 2001), thus the hypotheses help the researcher focus and decide whether to confirm or reject the results based on the preliminary assumptions. Qualitative research, on the other hand, aims at the fullest understanding of a given phenomenon (Forman & Damschroder, 2008). It is recommended to record the preliminary assumptions, thoughts, opinions and knowledge of the researcher in order to better understand the processes, draw the conclusions and to be able to distinguish them from the opinion of the researcher.

A qualitative, exploratory method is applied to identify and explain cross-cultural discrepancies. The goal of this research is not to confirm or contradict the hypotheses of qualitative researches, but to formulate research questions which also take into consideration the assumption-based thoughts of the researcher and support the research to explore and understand the subject.

The general goal of the research is to examine processes triggered by the encounter of Hungarian and South Korean culture. To explore the differences, presumably of cultural origin, in the thinking and interpretation patterns of members of Hungarian culture, based on their actual interaction with members of South Korean culture. Research is conducted at the level of the individual, so it examines reality as perceived

locally, but the level of the conclusions is distanced from that of the individual. This research applies the emic approach; it explains the general by using local concepts, so it draws conclusions at the national level (of Hungarian and South Korean culture, respectively), because it accepts that the members of the two cultures relate their interpretations to their respective national (cultural) categories (Chevrier, 2009). It aims to explore and explain cultural discrepancies manifesting themselves through actions of members of South Korean culture from a Hungarian perspective, in order to enhance the efficiency of cooperation between these two cultures.

The exploratory nature of the research question demands a qualitative methodology. Interpretative research is based on the actors, their interpretations and the interpretation of their jointly developed social reality (Burell-Morgan, 1979, Deetz, 1996, Romani et al., 2017).

The specific research goals, the related research questions and the research areas will be discussed below. Exploration is carried out by using the analysis of interactive situations and generalized expressions recalled by Hungarians in the narrative interviews. The goal is to collect and classify these types.

The following research goals have been defined:

1. To explore the types of (presumably cultural) discrepancies experienced by the Hungarian interviewees in interaction with South Koreans. The goal is to collect and classify these types.

2. To explore and understand how the interviewees interpret the cultural differences they experienced in interactive situations, and what factors and values they attribute them to.

3. To identify, by using a retrospective approach to the narrative interviews, what the interviewees had learned from thinking over their South Korean interactions in their own interpretation, and how these revelations affect their cooperation with South Koreans in the present and in the future.

4. To interpret the revealed cultural differences in practice in organizational life, with special regard to the potential applicability of the identified differences to enhance the cooperation of employees of the two cultures.

The original research questions were modified during the research. This is a natural process in qualitative research where shared knowledge is built up during the research interview from the interaction of the two parties (Kvale, 2005). At the beginning of the qualitative research, the researcher has no indications as to what kind of data he will gather during the data survey (Gelei, 2002 cited by Topcu, 2005). The research itself becomes a learning process, the factors of which finally become the barriers of the research.

I complemented the summary table of cultural researches shown in the theoretical part with the features of my own research. Table 8 represents similarities and differences between this research and other cultural studies.

Research area	Research goal	Research question
South Korean and Hungarian cultural discrepancies.	To explore the (presumably cultural) differences experienced by Hungarians interacting with South Koreans. To collect and classify their types.	What cultural differences do members of Hungarian culture perceive in their interaction with members of South Korean culture?
Interpretation of cultural discrepancies.	To explore and understand how cultural differences experienced by the interviewees in interactive situations are interpreted, and the factors and values they attribute them to.	How can cultural discrepancies be interpreted?
The effect of South Korean culture on the interpretation framework of members of Hungarian culture.	To explore through the retrospective approach of the narrative interviews what interviewees think they had learned from interactions with South Koreans in their own interpretation, and how that may influence their cooperation with South Koreans in the present and in the future.	How does their experience of South Korean culture alter the interpretation framework of members of Hungarian culture?
The relationship of South Korean and Hungarian culture in the life of the organisation.	Interpretation of the revealed cultural differences in the life of the organisation, in particular their potential use for more efficient cooperation.	What are the conditions of efficient South Korean/Hungarian cooperation in the organizational environment?

Table 7 Research areas, research goals and the associated research questions, author's compilation

Assessment criterion	**Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961)**	**Hofstede (1980)**	**GLOBE (2002)**	**Schwartz (1992)**	**Cultural metaphor (2012)**	**Cultural standards method**	**Hall (1990)**	**Trompenaars (1993)**	**Own research (2015-18)**
Subject assessed by the research	value					human activity			human activity
Assessment perspective	international comparison				mono-cultural	multi-cultural	international comparison		multi-cultural
Static/Dynamic	static					dynamic	static		static
Culture as unit of assessment	national culture					subculture	national culture		national culture
Emic/etic approach	etic		etic, emic	emic			etic		emic
Examination of one culture/comparability of cultures/identification of typical processes of the encounter of cultures	comparative approach				examination of one culture	typical processes occurring when cultures meet	comparative approach		typical processes occurring when cultures meet
Encounter of cultures: opportunity / source of conflict	opportunity					source of conflict	opportunity		source of conflict
Research goal	explanatory					problem-detecting	explanatory		problem-detecting and explanatory
Examination method	quantitative methodology					qualitative methodology	quantitative methodology		qualitative methodology
Connection between culture and psychology	cultural comparative psychology				-	intercultural psychology	cultural comparative psychology		intercultural psychology

Table 8 Cultural researches and their assessment criteria, complemented with the features of own research, author's compilation

3.1.4 Possible distortions of the research

Writing this thesis was a great journey for me, with lots of development opportunities. I have learned a lot about myself from continuous self-reflection during the research, and I have also developed a lot as researcher, thinker and practitioner. Considering my development pathway, I think it is important to present the questions and dilemmas I encountered that could modify and distort my research.

The original and general goal of the research was to examine the encounter of Hungarian and South Korean culture. My perceptions about the research changed during the test interviews, when I realized that the interviewees did not interpret the description of the research the way I had originally intended. Therefore I had to modify the detailed research description. For example that is when I finalised my definition of culture and started using the expression "cultural disparities" rather than "cultural differences". The word "difference" invoked comparison, something that I was trying to avoid, because the research was looking for actions that the interviewees noticed, but I did not expect them to find their "matching pair" in Hungarian culture. For example, instead of thinking about what Hungarians would have done differently under certain circumstances, I was interested simply in what actions of South Koreans seemed remarkable to the interviewees for some reason. The interviews also revealed very definite opinions on Hungarian culture, but since recording such data was not the purpose of my research, nor did I want to make statements about Hungarian culture on the basis of this research sample, I ignored these interview sections unless they contained information pertaining to the research.

I have also noticed that I relied fairly strongly on the results of previous cultural researches. There has been no research similar to mine (in terms of theoretical framework and paradigm); therefore, I relied on the findings of previous cultural researches in the phase of the formulation of the research assumptions. When analyzing the data and formulating the results I found it difficult to think in new patterns: the known research results "captivated" my thinking. It was difficult to exit this thinking framework; talking the results over and discussing them with my thesis supervisor was of great help to me.

The narrative stories told during the interviews did not necessarily indicate negative or conflict situations, but the perception of cultural disparities usually reminded the participants of conflict situations. Therefore, while analyzing interactions laden

conflicts, I relied on some conflict literature items for support (Thomas and Kilman 1974, Adler, 1992). Due to the methodology of the narrative interview, I was hoping that the interviewees would provide some individual explanation also concerning the drivers of such conflict-ridden actions that could be interpreted on the basis of the relevant literature.

The research was not meant to explore the interactions, stories, i.e. the actual events, told by the interviewees. I based it on their perceptions and interpretations, and I did not consider it my task to check them against reality. This underlined the subjective theory-of-science framework of the research.

The experiences of the interviewees originated from Korean organisations and from the capital of South Korea. Data analysis yielded certain pieces of information on the typical traits of the countryside Korea, but the research relied beasically on experience gained in urban life.

It can increase the reliability if another analyst is involved in the preliminary analysis to review the data categories before finalizing the coding. If two analysts come up with identical coding patterns of the same data set independent of each other, then the codes can be considered reliable (Forman & Damschroder, 2008). I did not use a secondary coder in this research. Involving a second coder could have increased the reliability of the research.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION AND PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS

3.2.1 The data collection process

The research applies qualitative methods for this exploratory study. In the following chapters I will introduce the theoretical background of these methods and their practical use in this research.

The mission of science is not juts fact-finding, but to reveal correlations between the facts (Primecz, 1999). The aim of researches in social sciences is to explain social phenomena. Therefore, to reach the research goal they seek methodologies suitable for collecting adequate evidence. The social science researcher obtains the explanations by interpreting the evidence. Consequently, one must be aware of the applicability features of data collection methodologies to select the right one, because this choice may exert a

great influence on the research results. The data collection methodology impacts also on the feasibility of data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Social science research applies two approaches: small-sample, descriptive, case-oriented, qualitative research and large-sample, variable-oriented quantitative research. These two methods are the dominant ones; some researches use a combination of the two methods. The number of the latter is marginal compared to the purely quantitative or qualitative ones (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The quantitative research methods measure human behaviour variables that are then analyzed by statistical methods. The goal of the methodology is generalization (Lehota és munkatársai, 2001). The quantitative researcher collects objective data that exist independent of him. Kvale (2005) demonstrates this by the miner metaphor: the data are the treasures that are taken to the surface from the mine (Kvale, 2005). As discussed in the previous chapters, quantitative researchers tend to use the functionalist or positivist paradigm as initial theoretical framework.

Qualitative research aims at the fullest possible understanding of a given phenomenon; it intends to provide a comprehensive description of the given research area, to understand processes and explain the experiences of the participants (Forman & Damschroder, 2008, cited by Kovács, 2017). Qualitative research is exploratory in nature: its aim is to explore and understand the problem. Data analysis may take the form of statistical methods or content analysis, but it will always remain flexible and context-dependent (Mason, 2005). Kvale (2005) compares the qualitative researcher to the traveler who discovers the phenomena, observes, talks, asks, interprets then returns home and constructs a story of his experience that he also interprets. Because of these characteristics, the thinking framework of qualitative research is usually the interpretive paradigm.

The most commonly used data collection method of qualitative researches is the interview. “The interview is such an oral information gathering procedure, in which the interviewer asks the interviewee targeted questions on the basis of a predefined plan or makes them speak by using other incentives” (Borgulya and Barakonyi, 1996). According to Kvale (2005) the aim of the qualitative interview is that the researcher can understand the interviewee’s world and reality, and to explore and understand his experiences, interpretations and associations. During the research interview, common knowledge is

built from the interaction of the two parties (Kvale, 2005). The interview is a reliable, flexible method of data collection in empirical research; its disadvantage is that it is time-consuming and can result in the overload of data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Kvale distinguished seven steps of making an interview (Kvale, 2005):

1. Designating the topic. Designating the objective of the research.
2. Planning. Planning the structure of the interview and acquiring the appropriate knowledge.
3. Conducting the interview. Acquiring essential information from the interviewee on the basis of the preplanned outline.
4. Data recording. Preparation of the interview material the analysis, preparation of the transcription.
5. Analysis. Selection of the analyzing method appropriate for the goal and topic of the research.
6. Examination. Examination of the validity, reliability and generalizability of the results.
7. Report. Presentation of the results according to the scientific requirements.

In the methodology of qualitative interviews multiple interview techniques can be distinguished. It is common in these techniques that they all want to describe the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee(s). The categories are distinguished based on how regulated the process of the interview is (following predefined questions or open, unstructured and driven by the events) (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The group interview method will not be detailed here, but I will describe the methods of the structured, semi-structured, unstructured and the narrative interviews below.

The structured interview is suitable for the examination of theories and formal hypotheses. The questions are closed and follow the sequence of the interview outline. The questions of the semi-structured interview are not in a fixed order, which enables the interviewees to formulate the answer with their own words. It is also possible for the interviewer to clarify the answers. It is the most commonly used method for exploratory studies. The aim of the unstructured, in-depth interview is to understand how the interviewees interpret the research subject, how and why they came to certain conclusions and how they interpret the phenomena linked to the research question (King, 1994).

In contrast with the conditions of quantitative research - reliability, generalization, reproducibility -, Lieblich et al. (1998) define the narrative researches as "research based on the analysis of narrative texts". The analysis itself can be the objective of the research, or the tool to interpret a certain question (Lieblich et al., 2008). According to Pászka (2007), there are indeed no ultimate solutions or interpretations in the interpretation of narrative researches, because the research focuses on the meanings, interpretations and cognitive processes. The narrative text has to be interpreted in the interaction of the events and their supposed meaning (Bruner, 2005).

We define the narrative as a text reporting events that has chronological and causal coherence (Hoshmand, 2005). "The narrative is present in the myth, legend, tale, short story, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, dance, painting..., in stained-glass windows, in the cinema, in comics, newspaper articles, conversations. In its almost endless diversity, the narrative appears in every era, location, society. The narrative began with the history of mankind and there have never been any people anywhere in whose life it wouldn't played a role. The narrative spans over cultures and history" (Barthes, 1977). According to Hardy, the role of narratives is omnipresent. "We dream in narratives, we remember in narratives, our anticipations have narrative forms, we hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, modify, criticize, create, gossip, learn, hate and love in narrative" (Hardy, 1968). According to László (2005), narratives appear in the context of social interactions. The events of life become socially visible via these narratives and they establish our expectations towards future events. These happenings assume the dynamics of stories: they have a climax, a nadir and a conclusion. One's whole life is the outcome of stories, whether experienced or told. Narratives permeate the events of everyday life, so these events also become narrative-like themselves. Narrative reports are embedded in social action; thus events become socially visible by the narratives that also establish changes regarding future events. Narratives are put into personal and social contexts (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000). Narrative thinking strives to give meaning and to "create coherence" (Pléh, 1996 cited by László, 2008).

We can define the narrative as a well-distinguishable form of discourse, as a method of understanding our own and others' acts, which does not deal with isolated acts and events, but with event series placed in time and context, creating a rational complex, and where connection with the consequences is also created (Gubrium and Holstein, 1997). A further distinctive sign of narratives is the combined appearance of events and

consequences: the selected events are told and shared systematically, coherently and arranged into meaningful units (Riesman, 2008).

Language can convey two kinds of knowledge: (1) what we speak about and (2) how we speak. Semin (2000) named knowledge conveyed by language structural knowledge.

In the broad research territory of narrative analysis, personal narratives i.e. the analysis of full life stories, is one of the endpoints; the opposite pole is when the narrative is analyzed as a short, thematically specified story, for example a response to a question formulated as a story. Researches between the two endpoints consider detailed stories embedded into context developed in the course of multiple interviews with the individual regarding the examined topic personal narratives (Mishler, 1999, Ibarra, 2003, Chase, 2008, Riesman, 2008, Maitlis, 2009).

Narration may be conceived of as a basic cultural phenomenon, which approaches its subject narratively, as a story, exploring narrative structures in it. Telling your story is a basic narrative need of humans (Petres Csizmadia, 2013).

Wengraf (2001) distinguishes three stages of the narrative interview. In the first stage the researcher supports and encourages the interviewee who tells his thoughts. According to Wengraf the main objective of this stage is interpretation; therefore, clarifying questions should be avoided. In the beginning of the interview the researcher phrases an introductory question which directs the narrative of the interviewee who - without the interruption of the researcher - creates a story from the events he recalls in the answer given to the orientating question and interprets it. In the second stage of the interview the researcher tries to better understand the interviewee's own interpretation, paying attention to asking back in the sequence followed in his story. In the third stage of the narrative interview the researcher has the opportunity to sit down with the interviewee again and ask the questions that arose in the meantime - which are indispensable for the analysis.

In narrative interviews, the key task of the researcher is to choose the right interviewees. The researcher should reduce the factors that may influence the individual's behaviour and conceal the cultural characteristics for social reasons, if only because of the relatively low number of the interviews (Romani et al., 2004).

At that time, Wengraf already suggests a (semi-)structured interview. Gelei (2002) recommends the following questioning techniques to separate the effects of cultural and other situational factors (Topcu, 2005).

- ✓ Specific questions to refine what was expressed.
- ✓ Probing questions to confirm or deny the researcher's assumptions.
- ✓ Questioning back to show active attention.
- ✓ Confrontational statements, which urge the interviewee to use more accurate phrasing.
- ✓ Reflective questions to help the self-reflection of the interviewee (Gelei, 2002).

When speaking about major episodes of their lives, people actually "formulate" themselves, they create their identity and organize their relationship with the social world. The narrative not just simply describes a sequence of events, but also shows the storyteller's emotions and interpretations, making the text unique (Chase, 2008). In first-person narratives, the "I" may be the narrator and also the protagonist of the story. The narrative is about the experiences of the self. It may also happen that the self's experiences are missing from the first-person narrative. At the level of text, the presence of the self is expressed by self-references. However, by recalling his own experiences, the telling self doesn't talk only about his subjective experiences, thus he doesn't ignore his partners' experiences. By telling these happenings the characters of the story accelerate not just the plot (i.e. they don't have only plot-related functions), but they represent essential psychological functions from the point of view of the state of the personality. The psychological content analysis of these actors and functions builds on the narrative characteristics, actors and actions representing the essence of the story by giving psychological interpretation to these characteristics (Pléh, 2006).

The specialty of the life story is the management of the passing of time, which can be connected to psychic processes and statuses. Chronology can be indicated in the stories safely by tenses and adverbs of time (László, 2005). There were several experiments to examine the connections between the use of tenses and the psychological processes. Rokeach and Bonier (1960) found that there were no differences between the participants in the use of verbs in past tense, but two groups were distinguished, one with people consistently using more verbs in present tense, the other one with people using more verbs in future tense.

The expression “narrative psychology” is linked to Sarbin (1986, 2001). Sarbin thinks that by telling one’s life story, some kind of identity plan evolves in which the story teller builds up his own self. From the details of the individual’s story we can conclude to his desires, commitments, aims. The bases of such inference is provided by the inner content of the narrative and its social, cultural and historical context. Narrative psychology thus assumes that people communicate the semantic content of their actions an experiences through stories (Sarbin, 2001).

Bruner in his book called “Real minds, possible worlds” (1986) examines the processes of meaning construction by empirical examinations (Bruner 1986, 1990, 1996, 2001, 2005). He distinguishes two ways of recognition, which create reality differently. One is the paradigmatic or logical-scientific method and the other is the narrative one. The first searches for truth via logic procedures, causalities, while the other examines the human intent and the events connected to it (Bruner, 2001). According to Bruner narratives don’t just report events, but also outline the psychological aspect of the story. Two fields appear in the narratives at the same time; therefore, the stories can incorporate some kind of psychological perspective. The conscious field includes what the actors know, think and feel or what they do not think or feel, whereas the field of action, made up of the evidence of the action, means the actor, the purpose, the situation and the tools. The simultaneous presence of the two fields of the narrative presumes that mature, crystallized, stories don’t just report what happened but outline also the perspective of the events. According to Bruner we give sense and meaning to our life via narratives (Pléh, 1996). Bruner emphasizes the ability to apprehend empirically the historical and cultural context of the psychological processes, the possibility of model making and checking (Bruner, 2001).

3.2.2 Identification of the observation units

The research questions and research goals identify the prospective observation units representing the basis for sampling in the research. The identification of the observation units is the process where the analytical units, the cases, are defined (Krippendorff, 1989).

My original goal was to specify the differences between South Korean and Hungarian culture. As mentioned before, after studying the literature I found that this research goal was not specific enough, and implied too many variables beyond my

researcher competence that might distort the research results. Therefore, I had to identify observation units suitable for providing information matching the research goals. The design of the sample under study has a great effect on the validity of the conclusions drawn from the data during the research (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

To establish the differences, the two sides (the members of South Korean and Hungarian culture, respectively) ought to have been studied along the same questions. The literature highlighted that, when two cultures meet, the members of a culture are most "surprised" by events that differ from their own orientation system (Thomas, 2006). As a Hungarian researcher I would probably have learned less from events narrated by South Koreans. The use of English and/or Korean as intermediary language would also have made the picture more differentiated, since language itself contains meanings and symbols (Gelei, 2002). Ultimately, the research came to incluede members of Hungarian culture (born and raised in Hungary) in touch with members of South Korean culture on a daily basis.

Daily contact (at the workplace organisation, university) and a defined minimum spell of the contacts were considered indispensible conditions to ensure that Hungarians involved in the research have more-than-superficial knowledge of South Korean culture. That is, it was a sampling condition for the interviewees to live and work in the researched culture and have opportunities for personal contacts with members of the local culture (Romani et al. 2004).

Ang, Dyne and Begley (2003) distinguish the expatriates from the group of foreign employees among the actors of meeting cultures. Foreign employees usually do not have permanent residence permit in the host country; they get allowances according to the local customs and laws, and they have contracts made on the basis of the local rules. Expatriates may be provided housing, schooling and other benefits from their organisation with the support of their organisation in the home country over and beyond the terms set out in the contract concluded according to the local rules. Expatriates may return to their own organisaiton after their temporary foreign residence, usually to a higher position because of their foreign experiences.

'Sojourners' reside abroad temporarily, they have a specific purpose for traveling to the destination country after which their residence would terminate, therefore they do not plan to permanently settle in the foreign country. Subcategories of people staying

abroad temporarily include tourists, guest workers and posted workers (Church, 1982; Bochner, 2006).

One of the conditions of getting into the sample was that each person should have spent at least 5 months and no more than 10 years in the foreign culture. The bottom limit of the time constraint was set based on the cultural alignment model (Oberg, 1960). In setting the upper limit of the timeframe, I considered the theory of Topcu (2005) that what matters the most is not the number of years matters, but the process of cultural socialization in the alien culture. I accepted the assumption that after 10 years in a foreign culture the individuals experience such a high extent of socialization and assimilation that it becomes difficult for them to identify the different cultural situations, therefore they can't support the identification of disparities in the research.

Therefore, the interviewees in the sample were in the phases of cultural shock, adjustment or acceptance, respectively, of their meeting with an alien culture (Lysgaard, 1955).

In addition to setting up timeframes, sampling was to be limited also geographically. I had to decide in which culture the interviewee had to reside at the time of the interview. The first option was that the participant had to live in the foreign culture at the time of the interview. In the second one the interviewees had lived in the foreign culture, but the interview could be conducted in their own culture. In the third option they could live in their home country provided that they worked permanently with members of the other culture (Topcu, 2005). I included in my research sample those meeting the criteria of the first and the third option.

To create the research sample, I sent official letters to organisations to identify potential interviewees. Unfortunately, this method was not successful: I found no more than five people this way. Later on, the research results explained why this method failed. Koreans like to meet with and trust business partners whom they know already or who were recommended by an acquaintance.

Finally, I started to use the snowball method. In this method, the search starts from several randomly chosen members of the community, proceeds along their contacts and continues until these threads meet. This ensures the inclusion of both the most significant and the peripheral participants of the contact network in the research (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The composition and the size of the sample can be modified throughout the research, until the end results are reached (Ragin, 1997). The number of the interviewees has to be high enough for the information they provide to be similar, with a decreasing novelty value. The number of interviewees is sufficient when the interviewer is able to complete the sentences and the answers of the participants (Kvale, 2005). My final research sample included 16 participants and I conducted three additional test interviews. One of the test interviews was not used in the research, because the interviewee became my cultural expert (Thomas, 2006), so finally I used 18 interviews. I was eager to conduct some more interviews (to satisfy my researcher curiosity), but the size of the sample has reached saturation point for the research goals I had in mind. The design of the sample was influenced also by the available resources, time and lack of more recommendations.

The representativeness of the examined cases is not a necessary condition of conducting a qualitative content analysis; qualitative research does not have to be generalizable (Krippendorff, 1989 cited by Kovács, 2017). Therefore, I did not aim at representativeness in designing the sample.

3.2.3 Data of the sample under study

The interviews were recorded between the 31st March and 17th December 2015; 10 were Skype interview and 8 personal ones.

The sample included 13 women and 5 men; 9 people lived in Korea, and 9 in Hungary at the time of the interview.

To ensure the anonymity of the interviewees I assigned an avatar to each of them, i.e. letters in alphabetical order based on the time of the interview. Furthermore, I defined age categories and assigned the interviewees to those, also to secure anonymity.

I assumed that interviewees in different life situations probably got acquainted with South Korean culture in different situations, so the research material would be enriched by asking about the experiences of interviewees with heterogeneous characteristics.

One criterion was the way they got in touch with Korean culture. Whether their cultural experience originated from Korea or from a Korean organisation in Hungary. Another criterion was whether they had had any previous cultural experience with Korean culture or the encounter was a new experience to them. I assumed that cultural adaptation

would be more successful if the encounter resulted from the voluntary decision of the interviewee (looking for adventures, marriage, grant won etc.) than in a non-voluntary context (e.g. posting, Korean manager at the organisation). In the first case, cultural curiosity may be the driving force of the expatriate's move, and that means openness to new experiences in the other culture. Moreover, an original voluntary decision may make people more patient and respectful in accepting the local customs and coping with its pace (Schneider és Barsoux, 1997).

Another assumption was that language skills, i.e. knowledge of Korean, may lead to deeper relationships and therefore a deeper understanding of that culture. I enquired about marital status (married/not married, children) because South Korean culture as Asian cultures in general bestows more honor on people having a family. One reason for the failure of integration was the low capacity of the family to adapt to the new environment (Black, 1992, Gregersen és Mendenhall, 1991). The sample included two persons whose spouse came from Korean culture.

It was pure luck that the research sample includes individuals who felt the new culture completely their own and adopted its characteristic features (disappearance, transition), and some who over-appreciated the values and norms of Hungarian culture (chauvinism). One interviewee adopted a mediator role and was capable of synthesizing, accepting the cultural discrepancies (Furnham és Bochner, 1982).

Avatar	Interview type	Interview duration	Age	Gender	Marital status	Current residency	Time spent in South Korea	Knowledge of Korean language	Relationship to the culture
A	Skype	83 minutes	25-30	male	not married	HU	7 months	beginner	employee of a Korean organization
B	Skype	36 minutes	40-45	female	married	SK	1 year	beginner	expatriate family member
C	personal	48 minutes	30-35	female	not married	HU	5 months	no	employee of a Korean organization
D	personal	42 minutes	50-55	male	married	HU	1 year	no	employee of a Korean organization
E	Skype	57 minutes	30-35	female	married	SK	1 year	beginner	employee of a Korean organization
F	Skype	57 minutes	30-35	female	married*	SK	3 year	intermediate	employee of a Korean organization
G	Skype	92 minutes	35-40	female	married*	SK	10 years	intermediate	employee of a Korean organization
I	Skype	53 minutes	25-30	female	not married	SK	4 year	advanced	employee of a Korean organization
J	personal	47 minutes	20-25	male	not married	SK	3 year	advanced	university student in Korea
H	Skype	64 minutes	30-35	female	not married	SK	4 year	advanced	university student in Korea
K	personal	71 minutes	20-25	female	not married	HU	4 year	intermediate	university student in Korea
L	personal	64 minutes	20-25	female	not married	HU	1 year	basic	university student in Korea
M	Skype	49 minutes	20-25	male	not married	SK	6 months	beginner	university student in Korea
N	Skype	95 minutes	30-35	female	not married	SK	3 year	basic	employee of a Korean organization
O	personal	36 minutes	35-40	female	married	HU	6 months	no	employee of a Korean organization
P	personal	30 minutes	55-60	female	married	HU	-	no	professional relationship with Koreans
Q	personal	52 minutes	35-40	male	not married	HU	6 months	no	professional relationship with Koreans

MO=Hungary, DK=South Korea, *=South Korean spouse

Table 9 Summary of the data of the interviewees; author’s compilation

3.2.4 Method of collecting and recording data

In accordance with the research goals and research questions, the primary data collection method of the research was the narrative interview. The outline of the interview was prepared and thought over in advance and it matched the research goals and set the structure/pace of the interview. Semi-structured interviews provide great flexibility for the interviewer, because it is possible to specify any misunderstood questions (King, 2004).

In the initial stage of the research, I made three test interviews, of which I used two in the final sample. The test interviews had a dual purpose. First, to test the research hypotheses and the interview scheme drawn based on the related literature. During testing, my goal was to find out whether the research questions were right to collect adequate information to reach my research goals. Second, I wanted to compare the interview situation, the narrative interview with what I read in the methodological literature and to practise the method. I found these interviews particularly useful. I have learned multiple lessons from them. One of the most important lessons was how to share my attention between the interviewee and taking notes. It is easier for the interviewee to engage in some kind of conversation with the interviewer, however it is more difficult for the interviewer to record what was said and to take notes of the researcher's own thoughts in that context. The interviews can only be reconstructed fully based on the notes taken. Therefore, I decided to use a voice recorder. I asked permission to record the interview, reassuring the interviewee that the audio material and the transcript will be used[17] by no other than myself. Fortunately, all but one of the interviewees gave permission to use voice recording. The other important lesson for me was to record my impressions or other important experiences concerning the interviews. Finally, I decided to divide the notepaper into two columns, in the first one I took brief notes of the thoughts of the interviewee, in the other one I detailed the questions and comments that came to my mind. It was really interesting to listen to the voice recordings while reading my notes. In these cases I found that personal interviews triggered much more emotion and thought on my side than those conducted via Skype. The third lesson was that I should change the order of the questions in the draft interview that can grouped by topics, the complexity of the

[17] In some cases a professional stenographer helped me write the transcripts. I also asked the permission of the interviewees for that.

questions or personal involvement (King, 2004); finally, I decided to go from general questions to more specific, complex and personal ones.

Because of the snowball method mentioned in the previous chapter, the appointments for the interviews were set simultaneously. All the interviews were recorded at a single (personal or Skype) session, in the presence of the interviewer and the interviewee and no one else. The personal interviews were conducted in the office or meeting room of the interviewee. I always conducted the Skype interviews from home to have a relaxed atmosphere. The online interviews were of good audio quality. The time difference also was not an issue because the interviews took place by appointment, usually in the evening, South Korean time.

Most of the interviewees were curious and communicative; they were content with the topics. In four cases, I received letters from the participants after the interviews containing additional information on what they had told me. As King (2004) pointed out, not every interview can be carried out smoothly, because the interviewee might not communicate enough or be too communicative, perhaps they are emotionally overwhelmed which can be an obstacle to an open conversation. It was interesting to see how the physical environment of Korean organizational culture brought back the memories of some interviewees. During one of the test interviews the interviewee was mostly telling me about conflicts with Hungarian employees. I removed this interview from the final sample because my research goal was not the examination of Hungarians. Also, I refined one of the questions based on this experience.

The day before the interview I sent a short e-mail to the participant about my research goal and the reasons why we would have the interview. This is how I oriented them about their role in the research and I listed the topics of the interview (King, 2004). I repeated that (shortly) at the beginning of the interview to tune the interviewee to the topic, and I asked permission to use a voice recorder.

The first questions were easy to answer, in order to create a relaxed atmosphere (Kvale, 2005). I asked the interviewees about their current workplace and life situation, including their age and marital status, qualification and foreign language skills.

During the second stage of the interview I asked them about their personal experiences in South Korea. (*What positive/negative/strange experience/memory can you recall from your encounter with the South Korean culture?*) It took around 75% of the

interview to answer this question. It was common in the interviews that the interviewees recalled first a few specific and/or memorable events. After a short standstill, they told further experiences. The recollections typically became more and more personal and reinterpreted.

In the third stage of the interview I asked question that could be answered shortly. (*Tell me the three words which best describe South Korean culture for you! Which characteristics could the Hungarian culture adapt from the South Korean one?*) These questions were based on the perceptions and personal assumptions of the interviewees.

In the fourth part of the interview I asked them about their organizational experiences (*What kind of personality should a Hungarian employee possess to be successful in the South Korean organizational environment?*)

Finally, I asked them about their future plans (*In which culture do you plan to live your life in the future?).*

The interviews were all conducted within the specified time span. At the end of the conversation I reassured the interviewees that whatever they said would be treated confidentially and their anonymity would be preserved, and I would send the transcripts so they would be able to review them. Only three people requested this, who made some minor corrections before returning the transcript (usually they refined their rough expressions and lowered the chances to identify a colleague from what they said).

Transcription is the conversion of the audio material of the interviews into text. A typed version of the interviews is prepared which the researcher can use for data analysis. These texts cannot reflect the interview as a whole, because they are only literal transcripts not including the emotional dimension. During data analysis these can be complemented with the researcher's own notes and insights (Forman & Damschroder, 2008).

During sampling, 18 interviews were conducted (altogether 19, from which I decided to exclude one test interview), which resulted in around 16 hours of audio recordings. To prepare the data analysis, a stenographer helped me do the transcriptions; I typed eight interviews myself, seven were done by the stenographer. As mentioned, one of the interviewees did not want the interview to be recorded, so I recorded the relevant notes myself. The transcriptions were made in the days following the interviews. In the documents of the stenographer I checked and corrected the designated parts which were

unclear to her. The process resulted in around 350 pages of interview transcriptions. The interviewees had their own folders among the research materials, which included the voice recording with the name of the interviewee and the transcription of the interview under the same name. For the sake of safe data storage, I used one offline and an online data storage medium for the files.

After conducting the interviews and preparing the transcription, the next step was the preliminary data analysis.

3.2.5 Preliminary data analysis

Preliminary or interim data analysis begins concurrently with the collection of data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). I will detail this process below. I will describe the possibilities of the analysis of narrative interviews and my decision in favour of content analysis; then I will introduce the separation (coding) of the analyzed units, including the methodological limitations of content analysis.

The narrative analysis is the text-based analysis of the way stories function and their content (Szokolszky, 2004). Narrative analysis is a collective term which refers to diverse methodological procedures (Czarniawska, 2007, Chase, 2008, Riesman, 2008).

We distinguish three significantly different forms of narrative analysis based on the approach used in the text under study. Formal structural analysis emphasises the role of text structures in creating meaning (Tinyanov, Eichenbaum and Propp, 1999, Labov and Waletzky, 1967). Content analysis examines the narrative on the basis of quantitative analyses, and psychology categorizes content by using this approach (Atkinson, Clark and Lowell, 1953, Holsti, 1968 cited by Ehmann, 2002). The criticism of these approaches is that they ignore the context of the narrative, thus the psychological or pragmatic meanings of the text cannot be explored. But this criticism can be managed by hermeneutical analysis which puts the emphasis on the context and social and cultural environment of the story. In psychology this approach explores the connections of personal stories and identity, and it does not consider it necessary to check the conclusions empirically (László, 2009).

I chose content analysis examining the narratives of the interviewees by quantitative analyses as the method of my research. Content analysis does not simply

examine the physical characteristics of the text; the researcher's goal is to read between the lines (Krippendorff, 2003).

The transcription of the voice recordings is already suitable for coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Qualitative content analysis applies a systematic coding system to analyse the content of text data, and makes it possible to identify the topics in the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005 cited by Kovács, 2017). It can be used to draw reproducible and valid inferences from texts; content is brought to the surface by the analysis. The coding system makes it possible for the researcher to arrange the data into an analyzable system (Krippendorff, 1989). Content compression means summing up a conversational unit in the shortest and most concise way; content categorization is the organization of the condensed units by groups and topics and the development of such groups (Kvale, 2005).

Creating the analytical categories is the focal point of data analysis. The starting point for such categories may be models offered by the relevant literature or the preliminary hypotheses of the researcher. The analytical units are further expanded and reviewed under the effect of data collection during the research. The researcher may use the deductive approach (predefined codes originating form the theoretical background and the research questions), or the inductive logic (codes directly generated from the data). Usually the two approaches are used together. Using deductive coding, researchers can get closer to the data. Gaps in the analysis are filled with the help of the inductive method (Forman and Darmschroder, 2008). Research results may be collated with the history, customs and social sciences literature of the culture under study that helps the researcher confirm the results (Gannon – Audia, 2000).

In the opinion of Baert (quoted in Primecz, 1999), the deep structure governing the phenomena appearing on the surface needs to be identified, and neither the deductive, nor the inductive method is fully satisfactory for that. Critical realists introduce retroduction (abduction) in an effort to assign meaning to newly observed phenomena by associating the mechanism concerned with metaphors, analogies, that seem to be akin to it in some respect.

The interrelationships of the analytical units and the distinction between main- and subcategories will thus change as the researcher acquires a deeper understanding and deeper insights. Coding means the process when the researcher assigns codes to given analytical units. Codes condense the original data and create the categories necessary for

the analysis. The final goal of the analysis is to describe and explain the relations between the categories indicated by codes (Krippendorff, 1989).

In the present research, codes were assigned primarily to paragraphs and secondarily to sentences. No coding took place at the level of words or phrases. The goal was to define actions and behaviours originating from cultural disparities, and to distinguish them from factors generated by conflicts of interest or by the context (Neyer-Köllnig, 2003).

In the process of coding I applied the Nvivo software available for qualitative researches[18]. The software supports data coding, the interpretation of information gathered, the identification and assessment of theories and the visual representation of results.

The most important phase of qualitative content analysis is the determination of the relationship between the codes and the examined phenomena (Krippendorf, 1989 cited by Kovács, 2017).

The goal of the observation of the phenomena is to understand the deep structure, i.e. the mechanisms that drive the actual level of reality. The argumentation relies on metaphors; on metaphors known to the audience (readers) already (Peters, 1997 quoted by Primecz, 1999); therefore, I assigned a Korean saying to each of the main codes I identified during the analysis, to make them clearer. Each main code includes several sub-codes. The sub-codes have no names or labels, but their introductory explanation always includes interview excerpts. The main and sub-codes are presented in the order of their occurrence frequency in the stories of the interviewees. Sub-codes mentioned by at least three interviewees were included in the analysis.

3.2.6 Credibility of the analysis

The credibility of researches in social sciences is based on three assumptions: validity, reliability and generalizability. Qualitative content analysis can be examined in the dimensions of reliability (the consistency of the analysis), validity and generalizability (to what extent to results can be adapted and generalized). The advantage of the method is that it can easily handle large amounts of unstructured data. Its disadvantage is that the

[18] The Nvivo software I used is the property of the Department of Organizational Behavior of Corvinus University of Budapest. I am grateful that I could use it for the research, along my way to formulate the results -- it was a big help.

analysis depends heavily on the context, which aggravates generalization (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Difficulties may include confidentiality, the softness and ambiguity of the qualitative data and the theoretical constructs based on them and problems of generalisabilty (Bokor, 1999).

I ensured the reliability of the research by the following methods: textual integrity, consistent data management and transparency of the entire documentation. In order to fully adhere to the text, the interviews were recorded and a literal transcript was prepared afterwards. In order to ensure consistent data management, the interview transcriptions and voice recordings were documented and they are comparable. The whole documentation of the research is accessible. In some phases of the research different versions of the transcriptions and the notes were archived to make the whole documentation accessible and the process reconstructable.

It can increase the reliability if another analyst is involved in the preliminary analysis to review the data categories before finalizing the coding. If two analysts come up with identical coding patterns of the same data set independent of each other, then the codes can be considered reliable (Forman & Damschroder, 2008). I took no such measure in my research, that is, I did not involve another analyst. In an effort to enhance reliability, I kept a research log of the development of the codes and sub-codes and I held several presentations of the results to university and professional audiences. I also consulted on the research results with my cultural experts.

The disputes about the research results, for example about the possible advantages and limitations of merging certain codes, also contributed to the reliability of the research.

The credibility of the research can be increased furthermore by the visual representation of the research results and the conclusions during documentation. Summary tables and figures promote the fast overview of the information content of large amounts of data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I made summary tables of the research results that are shown in the body text and the appendix.

The validity of the research is ensured by the transparency of the whole documentation of the research, its logical structure based on professional references and by the explanation of the specific steps of the research process (Miles & Huberman, 1994). “The validity of the method and the interpretation can be demonstrated through the thorough reconstruction of the way which led us there.” (Mason, 2005)

When formulating the results and drawing conclusions, the steps of the research were recorded in order for the documentation to be easy to follow and reproducible. The research results are accompanied by an adequate amount of interview citations (interviewee's name indicated), which demonstrate the contradictions and also non-average ideas. This increases the credibility of the research by demonstrating that the researcher works form the recorded research material instead of recording his own thoughts (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

3.3 RESEARCH RESULTS

3.3.1 Research context

As mentioned in the Introduction, this research fills a gap in the sense that it is the first professional research of the disparities of South Korean and Hungarian culture. Due to this deficiency of the relevant literature comparing Hungarian and South Korean culture, in addition to the data survey, I applied a also a more remote focus for the sake of the better understanding of the disparities.

I studied also the values of religions of East and West exerting a major influence on the values and ideas of the cultures concerned (von Glasenapp, 1975, Park, 1999, Gilgen and Cho, 1979). Therefore, my presentation of the results will start from farther away, with the introduction of the Eastern and Western value systems, the first being represented by Korean culture and the second by the Hungarian one. In the second part of the analysis, I will use data obtained through the quantitative survey of Korean and Hungarian culture, respectively, to identify their disparities, from a Hungarian perspective.

In the opinion of Hall (1960) culture can be observed in patterns considered self-evident by the members of the given culture. The basic hypotheses that are indispensible for the existence of a culture and imply the methods of the most efficient treatment of environmental challenges lie in the deepest, inner, implicit layer of culture (Trompenaars-Hampden-Turner, 1997). Religion is the form of social consciousness developed over history that keeps changing and determines the thinking, emotions, will and convictions expressed in action of the members of the given culture. Factors of influence of the dominant religious beliefs associated with a culture are its geographical location, history and contacts with other peoples and their cultures (von Glasenapp, 1975). The specifics of the world view carried by a culture define its values. Family, school and religious groups all contribute to transmitting the typical world view of a culture from one generation to another (Park, 1999).

In their research, Gilgen és Cho (1979) applied the assumption that the cultures of the world can be assigned basically to two major sets. The decisive religions of the Eastern one are Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and Hinduism. They are based the

western perspective on the Judeo-Christian traditions. They specified the questionnaire[19] they compiled so that its results make it clear who is a representative of the values of western culture, and who represents the typical values of eastern culture (Park, 1999).

The following statements were made concerning the two cultures, serving as the basis of the survey.

Specifics of Eastern culture:

- ✓ Man and nature are one and the same.
- ✓ Spiritual and physical existence are identical.
- ✓ Body and soul are one and the same.
- ✓ Man must accept being part of nature instead of dominating and enslaving it.
- ✓ In the universe everything is connected.
- ✓ Science and technological progress create the illusion of development.
- ✓ Enlightenment means becoming one with the universe.
- ✓ Enlightenment can be reached by meditation.

Specifics of Western culture:

- ✓ The human being has some traits that distinguish it from nature and from the supernatural.
- ✓ The human being is body, mind and soul.
- ✓ Human existence is overshadowed by the existence of a personal God.
- ✓ Man must take possession of nature for the sake of survival.
- ✓ Man must think rationally.
- ✓ Science and technological progress are the bases of development and prosperity.
- ✓ Men must reward their actions and the competitive spirit.

According to the research results, Korean participants showed features typical of the Eastern world view, and American students could be described as carriers of the Western world view. In personal interaction, the members of Korean culture strove for harmony and they assigned great emphasis to the social roles in communication and decision-making. This meant the priority of the community over the individual; a

[19] The questionnaire survey covered 160 Korean and 190 American university students. Answers according to the Likert scale can be provided to the questionnaire. The aggregate scores range from 0 to 100. Answers above 50 points indicate that the culture of the person concerned shows typically Eastern features, whereas those below 50 points mean someone representing the traits that are typical of Western culture (Park, 1999).

hierarchical relationship in interpersonal contact. The members of American culture represented the individualistic values, and regarded dependence on others definitely as a restriction of their personal freedom (Park, 1999).

The value-orientation model of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) was meant to study culture-independent values along certain basic questions of relevance to every individual. The number of answers to such questions is limited, and although potentially all possible answers exit in every culture, the members of a specific culture will give preference to some over others (Gudykunst-Kim, 1997). The features of the dimensions are similar to the research hypotheses of Gilgen and Cho (1979). Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck investigated the values present in culture along five dimensions that determine the behaviour and attitude of individuals belonging to that specific culture:

1. human nature orientation,
2. relationship of man and nature (the supernatural)
3. time orientation
4. action orientation
5. relationship orientation (Primecz, 2006).

In the dimension of human nature orientation (1), Confucian ethics determining Korean culture is driven by the idea that man is naturally good, and any evil is due to lack of insight and lack of learning. The universe is harmonious, so man should integrate into it and then the destructive features in him would not take effect. Human education in practice thus means the communication of the right knowledge (von Glasenapp, 1975). Christianity in general considers human nature something good, God created Man good, but he then took the wrong path. In the relationship of man and nature (the supernatural) (2), the Eastern religions do not encourage shaping the material world and acquiring supernatural power, but profess that man and nature are one and the same and men are meant to nurture and protect their environment. The masterpieces of Korean Buddhist architecture reflecting the harmony of man and nature (churches and monasteries) blend into the natural environment. The philosophy of the harmony with nature is shown also in the names of the entities of church complexes, i.e. Hall of Celestial Peace, Hall of Light. In Korean language, the days of the week are named after celestial bodies and the basic elements: sun-day, moon-day, fire-day, water-day. The commitment of Korean people to the harmony of nature is expressed also by the national flag. The middle of the white (symbol of purity) flag is occupied by a yin/yang symbol which together with the

four cosmic elements around it, sky, earth, fire and water, represent the perfect harmony of the universe. People in the western cultures try to dominate culture; the spread of their cities is given priority over the natural habitat. The world can be divided into three main zones or, in the broader sense, cultures in accordance with the three main food types: culture of wheat and cereals (Europe, North Africa, Middle East), culture of corn (America) and culture of rice (Asia). Rice-growing requires disciplined and well-organised community work. In Korean culture, survival depends on the interdependence and close cooperation of individuals involved in the process; this enhances their collectivist culture, as opposed to wheat that can be produced, due to its nature, by small communities, families or even individuals (Malcolm, 2008). In the dimension of time orientation (3), past-oriented (3A) cultures are characterised by tradition and respect for the ancestors, present-oriented (3B) ones by the principle of *hic et nunc*, a focus on the reality of the present and paying less attention to the issues of past and future. Future-oriented (3C) cultures give considerable emphasis to change, and consider the future the pledge of their further development. South Korea clearly belongs to the group of past-oriented cultures: the Eastern religions look on the world from the perspective of eternity, considering historical events the carriers of what is only transitional, indirect meaning. Korea has been using the moon calendar, designed also on the Chinese model and pegging time on Earth to the movements of the Moon, for centuries. The major festivities of the year and the decisive life-cycle events are associated with the changes of the Moon. Western cultures typically represent time in a 2D, along the past-present-future axis. Eastern religions teach the principle of reincarnation (permanent rebirth), whereas Western ones the one-off nature of creation and judgment (von Glasenapp, 1975). In the dimension of action orientation (4), Western cultures give priority to activity and a busy lifestyle, whereas other, mainly Eastern, cultures focus on self-knowledge and personality development. Western cultures tend to identify meditation, playing such an important role in Eastern religions, with idleness: tangible results are the only thing of merit for them (Gudykunst-Kim, 1997). Relationship orientation (5) is the dimension showing the degree of interdependence of individuals in a culture, and their ability to cope alone in everyday life, in the struggle for survival (Park, 1999). The same dimensions can also be interpreted under the label of collectivism/individualism. Korean culture is clearly collectivist, whereas Western ones tend to underline the importance of the individual.

In addition to shamanism[20], the way of thinking of members of South Korean culture is shaped by the religious beliefs of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Christianity (Protestantism and Catholicism). In a general and simplified way we could say that Buddhism governs the mind, Taoism the body and Confucianism society and the world (Keum, 2000). Confucianism, previously the predominant intellectual and political school and also Buddhism had been relegated into the background by now, and most believers today profess to be Christians[21]. Hungarian culture has been influenced most by the values of Christianity.

Due to geographical proximity, Chinese culture had had a powerful effect on the emerging culture -- language, customs and way of thinking -- of the Korean peninsula. Although the Korean population has different race specifics, and its language and customs have also become different, Chinese influence on the developing Korean culture and state had been most marked. Buddhism appeared around 370, mediated by the Chinese, and it became the state religion in every country of the Three Kingdoms (Koguryo-ban, Paekche, Silla). Korean Buddhism had its golden age under the Unified Silla (668-935), bringing cultural flourishing to the territorially significantly expanded Kingdom. According to King Taejo, founder of the Koryo Dynasty (935-1392), achieving your political goals and a flourishing country depended solely on the benevolence of Buddha, therefore, Buddhist monks were given considerable political and economic power. Until the 15th century, in the absence of their own writing, Chinese writing and classical Chinese language played a major role in the development of Korean culture. The strongest spiritual school, Confucianism that started to spread at the age of the Three Kingdoms and exerted an influence on the thinking, views on ethics of the literate, the emerging administration system included, through the Chinese language. The scientists of the age were raised on the text of Confucianism that became a factor determining everyday life in Korea (Keum, 2000). Neo-confucianism peaked at the tine of the Choseon Dynasty (from the 14th century on), coming into the foreground in politics and ideology.

[20] In shamanism, people expect answers to the questions of human existence from the, mostly female, shaman acting as intermediary between man and the spiritual beings, endowed with supernatural abilities and contacting the world of spirits through rituals.

[21] Around half of the Korean population claim to be adherents of an Eastern or Western religion. The ratio of Buddhists is 43%, that of Christians 55% (Protestants 34.5%, Roman Catholics 20.6%), other religions (Confucianism included) make up hardly 2%. Source: http://www.korea.net/AboutKorea/Korean-Life/Religion

Confucianism failed to become the dominant religion: the religious needs of the masses were still answered by Buddhism.

Buddhism as a religion was repressed due to the conflict of the Confucian and Buddhist concepts. Although Buddhism supports the community, it also implies some degree of turning away from society, and it provides no guidance concerning family and state life. Confucianism became the organising principle of social and economic life and spiritual source accessible to all in Korea (Keum, 2000): "No one can avail himself from learning, not even if he is of poor or low origin." It became the predominant political ideology of social and state life after the establishment of the institution[22] providing training for those in the supreme state agencies (Keum, 2000).

Since Koreans embraced the Confucian tenets while also adding what served their own national needs, this high-level ethic and social regulatory system has profoundly marked their way of thinking. Confucianism impacted Korean culture as a force organising society based primarily on the family, the school and the state (de Bary, 1988).

According to Confucius[23], founder of the spiritual school of Confucianism, everything has its proper order in human society as in the universe. "One may become a teacher by respecting our past and understanding out present, by listening to many things, selecting the good out of it and adhering to it, by seeing and remembering much." Confucianism is a philosophical school that does not provide dogmatic guidance (contrary to the religions), does not set the system of dogmas, but contains ritual requirements that have religious significance (von Glasenapp, 1975).

To achieve social order, and peace and harmony within it, each individual should know his proper place in society and assume the relevant responsibilities. Social harmony is maintained by benevolence, justice, knowledge of the etiquette, wisdom and sincerity. Human relationships are determined by a person's attitude to these values and to each other. Confucius named the halo underlying the social roles and society the "five relationships (or bonds)" reflecting reciprocity and a sense of responsibility.

1. Master-subject relationship

[22] The national Confucian academy (Seongyumggwan) was founded in 1398.

[23] The works of Confucius can be divided into two groups: canonic text compiled/developed by Conficius himself (Book of Changes, Book of Songs, Book of Writings, Spring and Autumn Annals, Book of Rites) and classical texts noted down by his disciples (Conversations and Sayings, The Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean). Conversations and Sayings includes the sayings considered the core of the Confucian school in the form of dialogues and anecdotes.

2. Father-son relationship
3. Husband-wife family relationship
4. Siblings' relationship
5. Personal relationship between friends

In the (1) ruler and subject relationship, the ruler must set an example to his subordinates by his just, benevolent and virtuous conduct; in return, the servant must be loyal. In the (2) father and son relationship the child has to respect and obey the parent, whereas the parent must provide for the child and raise him in love. Confucius extended this category also to the parents of others and to the ruler as father of the people. He projected the role of the father as strict leader also to the school, the workplace and other groups. Thus according to the Confucian tenets, the state is no other but an extended family. In the (3) husband and wife relationship, the wife is to give birth to children and care for the family, whereas the husband must take decisions and provide an adequate financial background. Confucianism thus considers the husband the active and the wife the passive, subordinated, party. (4) The elder brother is responsible for the younger one and, in return, the younger brother respects his elder brother and must obey him. The (5) friendship is a deep relationship based on trust. A friend will fulfill any request made by his friend by all means (Osváth, 2003).

Thus the basic Confucian social principles included separation by gender, age hierarchy, the unity of the family, the continuity of descent and veneration of the dead. According to Confucian teachings, family relationships represent the basis in social relationships and family values are also the values of society (Kim, 1969). Confucius considered preserving the traditions, performing the rites, critical. This spiritual conduct consists of respect, courtesy, self-restraint, avoidance of uneducated behaviour, and adherence to specific forms of courtesy developed by morality, of rites and customs.

In the early period of modernisation, Confucianism was regarded as an obstacle hindering social development (Lee, 1997). Vertically structured traditional Korean society based on the subordination of the individual to a superior power may easily come into conflict with horizontally structured democracy and its emphasis on the freedom of the individual. The inflow of the western ideas and ways of living due to the economic opening of South Korea had an outstanding impact on Korean society and in particular the (transformation of the) values of city dwellers. At the level of values and hierarchies,

one experiences a mixture of modern and traditional elements, and the steady replacement of the traditional value hierarchy by Western elements (Lee, 1999).

South Korea has seldom been an independent country in its history; it was mostly the vassal of a neighbour, an invaded or annexed country. As the neighbour of China and Japan, it acted as mediator at times of peace and as bumper at times of war. Given the scarcity of supplies in the country, frugality and a more modest way of living became typical characteristics. The role of the community always appreciated at times of need. These factors together with the values professed by Confucianism, i.e. unity of the family, continuity of descent, had a great influence on emerging Korean organisation culture (Marosi, 1997). Chebols, i.e. business groups of large companies led by family members and relatives and acting in highly diversified areas in terms of profit generation, are present in great numbers and carry significant weight (Yoo and Lee, 1987); by another definition, these are financial groups consisting of various joint companies with a diversified business profile and usually under the control of one or two interlinked families (Steers-Shin-Ungson, 1989). Chebols are identified by six features: (1) family supervision and management, (2) paternalist leadership, (3) central planning and coordination, (4) entrepreneurial orientation, (5) close business-administration contacts and (6) strong school contacts in the field of employment. The leader's position is occupied by the founder or his son, and that person assumes personal responsibility for the performance of every member of the company group. It is a basic hiring requirement to select someone from one of the high-prestige universities (Seoul National University, Yonsei University, Korea University, collectively: SKY universities) (Steers-Shin-Ungson, 1989).

Based on Weber, founder of protestant Puritanism, Lee (1997) summarily labelled the typical features of Confucianism providing the basis of modern Asian society "Confucian Puritanism". These include e.g. mutual respect, high motivation for development, the importance of education, the priority of the community over personal interest, and the importance of family life (Lee, 1997). Two possible factors of Korean economic success are also linked to Confucianism. The employer as caring and respectable father is responsible for the employee who as loyal and obeying "son" will be ready to make sacrifices for the workplace. The other factor is the efforts of the family to let their children learn at the best school and thus become masters of what thy do later.

Confucianism is the force organising society, with the family, the school and the state as its main bases. These three factors together contribute to the transfer of Confucian ethics and moral from one generation to the next, from respect for the ancestors and the traditions to the development of exercising the family rites and of the love for learning (de Bary, 1988).

Due to its geographical location and entrenching policy, this Far Eastern culture had no cultural contacts of merit with the world beyond its region. It was only in 1628 that the first Europeans arrived to the territory of South Korea (Csoma, 2008). Korean culture is therefore characterised by duality. Long-term isolation has made lack of change a typical value. They stick to their traditions, respect their past and the social relations ever (Maroi, 1997). Their desire to prove themselves, their national sense of mission (Ostváth, 2005) and accelerated economic performance have led to unbelievable innovation efforts. South Korea is changing; the key to its success is competitiveness and the exploitation of the possibilities of the modern age.

This duality manifested itself also in the research. The stories and reports included strong cultural characteristics, but the interviewees often added that "these are changing". Most interviewees indicated that South Korea was developing at such speed that the old, traditional values were changing and the values and beliefs in culture changed also under the impact of the western cultural inflow. For example, they saw the fact that South Korea had a female prime minister (Park Geun-hye, 2013-2016) as a sign of the softening of the values supporting male superiority according to the Confucian values and of the reinterpretation of the female roles. According to the observations of the interviewees, the family roles have also changed. The bonds of the traditional family model seem to be loosening. Close child/parent bonding also seems to soften: the youth consider their own prosperity (employment in the capital instead of the native town) more important than the unity of the family, of staying together at one and the same place. The research goals did not include the investigation of these changes: I wanted to see the discrepancies of South Korean and Hungarian culture from a Hungarian perspective. Therefore, this research cannot answer questions pertaining to the interpretation of a phenomenon triggered e.g. by youth, by age and the desire to be free as a modification of the Confucian value system. Culture was considered in the research a static phenomenon determining the behaviour of its members along permanent values. We looked on the phenomena of changing Korean culture merely as the context of the investigation of the cultural discrepancies.

3.3.2 One tiger by family, and you will have order.

The most frequently mentioned experience of Hungarian interviewees related to hierarchy as discernible and present in Korean society. Such differences concerned the old/young, female/make dichotomies and the roles within the family. In the opinion of the interviewees, in communication and in everyday situations, Koreans always considered first of all their (hierarchical) relationship to each other. They could not sit patiently, not even for the time of a conversation, until they learned what they had to about their new acquaintance, i.e. until they came into possession of the necessary information.

"When I got used to this being a requirement, I produced a brief introduction about where I worked, when I arrived, how old I was and that I had a wife. This facilitated my own task and also theirs. After that, Koreans always knew who would have a conversation with me or sit by my side in company." (Interviewee D)

In line with the Confucian values, interpersonal relationships exist in the framework of hierarchical relations. In Confucian cultures, social inequality is not only expected, but actually desirable. The ruler must be just and benign, and set an example to his subordinates by his moral behaviour, in return for which his subordinates (servants) owe him loyalty. "If the water upstream is clear, water downstream will also be like that", that is, like king like herd (Osváth, 2003). The Confucian state ideal is the extended patriarchal family, where everyone has his/her place (Tőkei, 1974).

For Koreans, the way they should relate to a conversation partner is defined by age and social rank. They consider the year of birth or in case of identical years the exact date of birth of family and friends and also colleagues indispensable. Social rank is determined by one's workplace, the position occupied there and by marital status. Employees and company managers of large Korean companies are highly respected, and the same goes for teachers. Koreans look up on the representatives of prestigious professions (physician, lawyer). Such positions can only be occupied by those who studied at the best universities and invested lots of work in their careers. Given the above criteria, it is understandable that such people are highly regarded. Interestingly, social rank is influenced also by financial status. Thus the members of powerful Korean company-owner families (wife, children) with significant influence and wealth also

receive high praise. They have not worked for their success themselves, but they possess privileges based on their family, on being blood relations.

Hungarians consider hierarchy and the expressions of subordination and super-ordination quite marked in the language, expressions and also behaviour of Koreans. Mastering Korean is quite a challenge for Hungarians, due partly to the cultural differences and partly to the complexity of the language. Respect for someone at a higher level of the hierarchy is an inherent feature of Korean language. There are six levels, each of which should be used at different levels of the hierarchy. For example, different levels are used among friends, with parents and in public newspapers, and the more polite you are, the more sophisticated vocabulary you use to demonstrate your respect for your conversation partner. In addition to age, ranks and titles also play a marked role in identifying your relationship to someone else. "Name[24] is a title that gives people their definite stand in any company and defines their relationship to others" (Osváth, 2003). Koreans consider the last name also their personal property, so only the family and closest friends will use it.

"You will not have a feeling of the things until you do not get acquainted with the language. This person should be spoken to like this, that one like that, because this one is older than I am and the other ranks higher. Your success depends on your willingness to practise that." (Interviewee G)

Koreans do their best to express respect also in a foreign language, even if the foreign language, such as English, does not provide any linguistic means to express hierarchical relationships.

"I often feel they cannot tell in English that they are still in the circle of politeness they ought to use in that situation. That is, in my opinion, they are closely bound by Korean language, their freedom is language-dependent." (Interviewee N)

This is (also) why it may seem that Koreans do not speak English well. As for the English language skills of Koreans, the opinions of Hungarian interviewees varied. Many though Koreans do not speak good English. In the opinion of another part of them their acquaintances spoke English well, but there were some barriers that prevented that being noticed by an outsider. According to the interviewees, Koreans have a larger vocabulary

[24] Korean names are structured like Hungarian ones: first comes the family name, made up mostly of a single syllable. The word indicating rank follows the personal name. Children cannot inherit the name of the their ancestors, nor that of kings (Hidasi, 1998).

and more hours invested into language learning than a Hungarian with average intermediate English skills. Because of its simplified nature (no treatment of hierarchical levels), English hinders Koreans who do not want to be in inconvenient situations and it prevents their open and fluent communication in a foreign language.

The interviewees agreed that Korean is very difficult due to the cultural aspects and also to its pronunciation. However, they told many positive experiences of how grateful Koreans are if they spoke even a few words of Korean. Therefore, most of them were learning Korean and wanted to know it at a high level one day, feeling that they would get closer to the culture and to people there with that.

Age is thus a decisive factor of social relationships. Even a few months' difference may cause a change in conduct and speech style according to the Hungarians. The older you are, the more respect and honour is due to you in Korean society. In Hungarian culture, respect for the old based merely on their age is not such a strong cultural feature. Therefore, the interviewees found this respect for the old based merely on their age and the obstinacy of old people incomprehensible.

"There is this type, the man over 50, who thinks, because of his age, whatever he says is so. You may see that even in the street, someone who thinks he must go where he should must not. It was on the news that a gentlemen infected by the MERS[25] virus thought I do whatever I want, whereas he was told he was infected and should not go anywhere. He was not interested, the virus would disappear on its own, he knows better. He went out in the street, putting others at risk." (Interviewee E)

The stability of Asian society stems from respect shown by the younger to the older and the obligation of the older to advise to the younger (Hofstede and Bond, 1988).

"I saw a group of young men in suits help an old granny in the business district. Her cart carrying lots of paper and boxes collapsed. No such thing would happen (in Hungary) for sure. People would pass by, that's just an old woman collecting dubious things." (Interviewee L)

In accordance with the Confucian views, the behaviour of the young towards the old is subject to strict rules. The etiquette for meals, for example, requires that a young person should only sit down after the old had occupied their seats at the table and finish

[25] Middle East respiratory syndrome English abbreviation: MERS.

his meal and leave the table after the older persons did that. It is a sign of respect that the younger serves the older at the table.

"When I met the family of my partner, he expressly asked me to find an occasion to pour a drink to his father. His father would be very glad to see that, because that's a most polite gesture towards the older. I found that a little strange, but later on I saw that he was really very glad and made a satisfied face." (Interviewee I)

Female interviewees were more sensitive about the differences in the male and female roles experienced in Korea culture. The interviewees said that, as women and youngsters, they were multiply underprivileged even in such everyday business dealings as going to a shop or the bank.

"In my opinion women are basically estimated less." (Interviewee G)

"Here in Korea, younger persons and women are, how should I say, to put it bluntly, looked down. Whatever you do, it is totally irrelevant what you have and where you graduated from, if you are young, say younger than the boss or your colleagues, or anyone, you are not equal." (Interviewee I)

Interestingly, male interviewees also felt confused sometimes in their new role, even in what was a well-known situation at home.

"I often let the women exit the elevator first at the company, they are always highly surprised and keep bowing. Or they simply tell me to go first and wait until I exit first." (Interviewee D)

"I will never get used to that, you cannot let women go first at the door, as you would at home. It always leads to a scene of some kind, and makes me feel awkward for having tried to be polite." (Interviewee A)

The Korean proverb, "If the woman is the head of the house, the family is at its end" is a good illustration of the social role of women in Korean culture. According to Confucian tradition, women owe obedience to three men during their life: their father from birth to marriage, their husband in marriage and their son in widowhood (Park, 1999). Socially, men occupy a higher level of the hierarchy than women. The wife is to give birth to children and care for the family, whereas the husband must take decisions and provide an adequate financial background according to the traditions. The husband is considered the active and the wife the passive, subordinated, party. In organisational life,

according to the interviewees, women give preference to international companies guaranteeing more equality than Korean ones.

Hierarchy is intensively present also in the family relationships. In addition to age, behaviour and respect within the family is determined by the relationship of the family members to each other. Parents bring up their children who then provide for and support them in old age. Parents do everything to care for their children, and the responsibilities of the child include, in addition to obedience, also good learning results and coping at school. According to a Korean proverb, "Even if the son carried the parent on his back for a hundred years, he would still be unable to pay back the unselfish goodness he had received". The family functions also as decision-making unit, defining not only the issues of everyday life but passing decisions also concerning the future of the individual. Thus parents will often decide on the career choice of their child if in their opinion that would ensure their progress in their later career, their social mobility and material wealth. The child can achieve harmony within the family by avoiding confrontation. The Hungarian interviewees found it strange that there is no age when the youth detach from their parents: they keep obeying their decisions, as is their obligation, throughout their life.

"Parents invest a lot in their children, it seems to me, and the expectations are enormous. Everyone is expected to go to the best universities, to be admitted whatever the cost, and then work at the best companies, earn a lot and be the best in everything. Somehow they do not accept if someone chooses a somewhat different pathway, or let's say their goal is not to earn a lot at a big, enormous company and work night and day. As I noticed, parents do not like to accept that, and neither does society in general." (Interviewee G)

"As the child grows up, he will see he must do what his parents and teachers tell him. If he does not, he will be punished harshly. You obviously do not want to be punished, so you do it. But then you also experience the amount of power you are given as you ascend and become older than someone. So, as my husband said, you simply have to grow up." (Interviewee F)

In the model of Bassis, Gelles and Levine (1995), language is one layer of culture. One form of appearance of Korean culture may be the folk tale. The two tale excerpts (1984) clearly show the peculiarities of Korean culture. The tale "Tomb of the Tiger" depicts the tasks of the family members: the parent does everything for the child who

returns that in adult age by his loyalty. In Hungarian folk tales, the family usually does not stay together: the younger members set out on a journey to try their luck when they grow up.

“Once upon a time a man had a son born. He raised the child with great love and gentleness. He gave him everything, gratified his every wish. But in a few years’ time, the father died and the child woke up to bitter days. Hardly any money was left after his father and the widow knew nothing about farming. So they fell on hard times. Yet the boy was not ashamed of working. He worked as hard as he could. But however hard he tried, his earnings were hardly enough to feed his mother. His earnings covered no more than their daily rice portion. He grew into a man, but he was too poor even to marry. He led a wretched life, waiting for luck to smile on him. Everyone in the village loved, respected the poor boy for his honour and diligence, and mainly for his gentle love and care for his mother. One evening when he returned from work, tired, he was greeted by a sad sight. His mother was lying on the floor, seriously ill. helpless. The boy put her to bed at once and cooked dinner. The next day he did not go to work but stayed at home to nurse his mother.”

The next tale is also about the family roles. Moving away from the values professed by Confucianism is described also in the tale as a threat, one that is considered the biggest danger in modern Korean culture.

“Once upon a time there was a poor boy. Every day he went to the forest to collect brushwood. Whatever he collected, he brought back to his parents. They sold the wood and bought food on the money. One day, as usual, the boy was collecting wood in the forest. Time flew quickly; by the afternoon he was very hungry. He looked around to see if he could find some edible plant. He was pacing back and forth in the forest. But he found nothing but a richly laden hazelnut shrub. He picked a hazel and put it in his pocket. For my father, he said. He picked another one: For my mother. He picked a third one: For my elder brother, he said. He picked also a fourth one: This for my young sister. Now comes my turn. With that he cracked the fifth nut and ate it heartily. (...) at around midnight the door opened. The boy heard loud conversation. He carefully look down and saw a group of elves settle down in the room. They told each other their adventures of the day. Where have you been all day long? I travelled on the tail of an ox. And you? I searched the whole country for a child who really respects his parents, but in vain. Oh dear, the world is full of evil, there is no honour even in children.”

Social status, so important in South Korea, as well as educational attainment and career prospects play a prominent role in choosing your partner. A well-chosen partnership/marriage is important to Koreans as a means to improve the future of the family financially and also in terms of social status. Several interviewees told that their partner was highly respected in his family, he occupies a better position at the family dinner than older relatives not married yet.

"Their ideas on family are very different. When you reach a certain age, if you are not married yet, that' s too bad. People keep offering me to find me a husband." (Interviewee N)

The so-called blind dates where men and women of identical social standing, whose relationship would probably be accepted also by their families, can meet are highly popular in South Korea. Such dates are usually arranged by acquaintances who are aware of the circumstances and potentials of the parties. Dating in the street or at clubs is not typical, especially if the parties have serious intentions.

"The hierarchy is very strong, i.e. who is where. Those at the bottom find it very difficult to get married. For women expect a husband who is one step higher than they are." (Interviewee K)

"If the girl studies at Yonsei University, in a very difficult degree program, say the medical one, she will probably not date my university group mate, a boy studying at the Korea faculty of a simple university in the countryside. The girl is so much higher that the boy feels that level is out of his reach." (Interviewee H)

Dating (that is, meetings for other purposes than marriage) appears among Koreans in a very special form. The interviewees reported that men obey girls, they wait upon them when they date.

"They carry their handbag, a rather ridiculous sight, the guy marching with a handbag, and his girlfriend fluttering by his side. What happens after marriage, that of course is a different issue altogether. Many girls want to win the jackpot with the man and live a comfortable life afterward, but it may be that in marriage the roles reverse to the man being very-very dominant." (Interviewee J)

According to the interviewees, young dating couples wear identical clothes, create common nicknames of their names, that is, they show their feelings more openly in public than is usual in Hungary. However, they emphasised that this does not mean the physical

level. Appearance, the likeness of the clothes are important elements of belonging together, but young couples also keep their distance from each other.

"Here a young couple would never kiss in the street, leaning against the wall, as they would at home. They only hold hands, shyly. You will see no open kisses or embraces." (Interviewee M)

There are many motels in South Korea used expressly by young adults to spend time with each other. They live together with their parents and grandparents, and if they want to have some free time, they go and spend their time more freely. The motels are well-equipped, with computers, video games, board games. Young people go to such places in pairs or even with larger companies.

The Hungarian interviewees living in South Korea did not rule out having Korean partner and some actually chose this country to find a partner and settle down definitively there. The common denominator in their opinions was that Korean-Hungarian relationships and marriages are not without problem. The majority of Hungarians said the relationship options are narrowed by the fact that, as non-Koreans, they have no characteristics that might be attractive to Koreans looking for a partner or a spouse. A minor group, however, argued that being a foreigner is perceived as a possibility by the youth and also the parents there, for they are considered representatives of the Western, American way of life.

"Highly conservative parents would not accept that their child, whether a boy or a girl, dates or married a foreigner." (Interviewee H)

"My ex partner said when we dated he was always afraid someone would see us and tell his parents. He said his father would have killed him." (Interviewee L)

Traditional Korean society thus considers marriage not primarily the union of two young persons, but of two families. Marriage is the symbol of the birth of a new family based on the union of two families. Whereas Hungarian marriages are concluded generally on the basis of the feelings of the husband and the wife, in South Korea this is still considered secondary. A well-chosen marriage may secure a good future for the family. In return, the personal achievements of the individual are "posted" as the successes of the family, and any errors and omission as the responsibility of the whole family (Hofstede&Bond, 1991).

"You must get married and have a child also. But the family as co-working group is a must have. You do not necessarily have to have deep emotional bonds, but you must function well as a business entity." (Interviewee F)

Of course, the interviewees have also reported marriages based on love. But they have also quoted examples where the husband in the family functioning as economic unit was looking for pleasure elsewhere, and that was completely acceptable for those around them and for society.

After marriage, Korean women do not start using the family name of their husband, and the family of the husband looks on their daughter-in-law as outsider as she is the only one who does not use that name. This loaded mother-in-law, daughter-in-law relationship was explained by one of the interviewees as follows:

"In old Korean culture, a woman was nothing. Nothing in the sense that she obviously did her tasks, but always had to serve men, and once she got married, she became part of the family of the man, and if she was expelled rom it for some reason, she could not return to her own family, for what kind of woman are you if they chased you away, what woman if you do not, cannot give birth, not to a male child. What kind of woman are you if you do not listen to your mother-in-law. Obviously, a woman gains strength when she becomes a mother-in-law. Or, finally, she becomes the older, also in terms of age, because the older you are, the more respect you are given, the more power you have, so to say, over others." (Interviewee K)

Two interviewees on the other hand confirmed that they had no problem at all with the family, they were very kindly received after their marriage. Nevertheless, they have also heard many negative examples where the new wife had no right at all in her new family. They considered themselves the lucky exceptions.

"Men have much more authority, I do not contest that. Men work, but for example the money is budgeted by the women. Therefore, no need to fear for these women. They are so tough, they would put any European woman to shame. They are determined, very very strong, they have to withstand much more in my opinion than we could." (Interviewee B)

I refer to the main code describing the strong hierarchy present among the members of society and of an organisation, manifesting itself along the dimensions of

old/young, man/woman and mother-in-law/daughter-in-law “One tiger by family, and you will have order”.

3.3.3 Korean people are industrious ants.

The second most frequently mentioned disparity between Hungarian and South Korean culture is observable in work ethic. Hungarians asked in the interviews spoke of workplace performance expected by the Korean organisations and of the expected employee behaviour. They were surprised by overtime and weekend work being taken for granted after a daily 14-15 hours of work. The interviewees said after their daily work obligations, at the end of their working time, they would have returned home at the earliest possible moment, leaving the workplace and if possible also the workplace concerns behind. This, however, was contrary to the Korean organisational and employee concept, and this is what generated one of the most conflict-laden situations in everyday life.

“At most companies, many work more than they would in Hungary, but not as much as the time they spend there. My working time was ten hours, but I spent twelve hours there on average.” (Interviewee Q)

“For example, working from eight a.m. to six p.m. and going home at six that happens practically nowhere. You start at eight, and stay there at least until seven in the evening, but at least until your boss is there. That is, if your boss leaves, you can also leave, after him. Irrespective of the amount of work you have.” (Interviewee I)

It is indicative of the performance-oriented nature of Korean culture that it occupies a prominent place in the world ranking of weekly working hours. The Labor Standards Act of 1997 already limited the number of working hours of employees, but it failed to bring about the desired decrease. Employees have kept working 13-15 hours a day. Interestingly, 96% of Korean managers would keep working even if they had such wealth as would be sufficient for life. The accelerated economy may be due to their desire to prove themselves in the shadow of Japan and China, a kind of national mission (Osváth-Romhányi, 1995). As shown by the quotation “Hard work to the point of exhaustion is required to be able to avoid the risks of the unpredictable world” (Kim, 1969), in Korean culture hard work is the means of avoiding uncertainty among other things.

In the opinion of the interviewees, the Koran organisation considers not only the number of hours spent at work, but also the dedication of the employee, keeping the interests of the company in mind, highly desirable.

"I cannot put it better than it is a most humble attitude to work. That is, some kind of dedication, self-sacrifice, or I don't know what, for success, some kind of sacrifice for success." (Interviewee N)

According to the interviewees, employees are almost expected to go to work even if they are ill, since work is waiting for them and they are afraid their colleagues would stigmatise them if they stayed at home and they might even be sacked. Companies already start looking for new hires to replace employees on sick leave for a longer time, and they even ask the employee himself to help find someone in his place.

"What is expected is to work more than ten hours a day, whether you are sick or healthy, or have to go to hospital. You are expected to die there at the workplace for the company." (Interviewee E)

Hungarian interviewees expressed differing views on whether the high number of working hours actually meant efficiency in practice. Long hours of work did not mean for them that time was actually spent by uninterrupted work. In many examples, what really mattered was compulsory presence and appearances.

"They expect you to do something, you work only for appearance's sake, what counts is not what you actually do." (Interviewee I)

In the opinion of the interviewees, the fact underlying the conflict between the different South Korean and Hungarian work ethics is that Koreans consider form, appearance, important, whereas Hungarians tend to focus on content and on the real happenings. If a Korean employee has no further task, he will keep refining what he had done already, as a diligent worker should, so he will never seem to be out of work. Hungarians, on the other hand, confessed that once they were finished they sat at their place and rather rested and fretted for not being able to go home already.

"You must do totally superfluous things. For example, when the owner of the restaurant came in and told me you cannot just stand there, not even if you had done all the work by then. That is, the whole restaurant is clean from attic to basement, there is not a single guest, but I cannot just stand there, I must not do that. Did I wipe the table top? Is it clean? Then let's start it again. Let's show I am working." (Interviewee E)

Besides the above, Hungarians told many positive experiences also about the enthusiastic Korean employees. Their quality work, readiness to be of service generated positive feelings in the Hungarians.

"We go to see the Korean National Museum with the school groups each year. The lady acting as tour guide was the same person in the past five years. Her enthusiasm for the tiny jewelry boxes on show has not changed one bit. As if she started her work yesterday. I wish I would be that enthusiastic with my children." (Interviewee G)

"They work at different levels, but they do their best at their level. In the countryside, you should not expect that when you enter a place, it would be gleaming. But within the range of their own simple things, what you get will be perfect. For example, this is quite visible in restaurants. In Hungary, you would never enter a place like that. There, if you go in, you will get good food and meet nice people." (Interviewee J)

"I feel that they do their best for the customers at their own level." (Interviewee M)

"This is no joy, but it must be done well. He may not like it, he may be fed up, but you as customer must not see that. That is, whatever you get must be perfect and they have to be polite with you." (Interviewee P)

The great majority of Hungarians considers service standards outstanding compared to the Hungarian ones. They met with well-arranged, precise and fast work. Many mentioned their experience that people were assigned to specific work processes, so each had to focus on a single task only. This may be the reason why they can concentrate on being perfect in their own work.

In addition to absolute commitment to the Confucian values, the work ethic of members of Korean culture is influenced also by organizational culture, i.e. the system of common values, norms and rules that every group member should observe (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1991). That is, the national cultural values are present also at the level of organisational culture.

Hungarians considered the impetus experienced in Korean workers and their individual sacrifices for the organisation strange. Korean employees sacrifice their rest period, family time, for building their Korean company. Apart from their comments on the desirable weekly work hours, the interviewees missed private life. Their private life would be dedicated rather to family, friends and rest. The company wants the "whole

person", that is, the worker remains the "property" of the company not only during his working time, but also after it (Steers-Shin-Ungson, 1989)..

"Work comes first, not the family. A Hungarian colleague of mine was sacked by being told he gave priority to the family, not the workplace. And he said yes, to me, the family comes first. This does not work like that here. Work must be the first." (Interviewee Q)

"In Korea, I think they consider the firm, work, the first, the most important. Family and friends must support that they make the best of themselves at the company. If someone cannot do that, well, that's difficult." (Interviewee B)

Daewoo, for example, provides training also to the spouses of the employees as part of its workplace program, to introduce the company and its goals also to them. They demonstrate that not only the employee, but his whole family is a member of the big Daewoo family. For, it has been realised that a supportive family background has a beneficial effect on performance at the workplace, and success at work is the success also of the family (Steers –Shin –Ungson, 1989).

According to the Confucian values, the individual pays attention to his own inner development; he keeps learning and training himself. The individual must train himself and his family first, then the state would also be in good hands and this creates harmony and happiness in the whole world (Hoi-Ling Kwan). Proper education is suitable even to improve the nature of the individual (Turner-Acker). This is the concept that explains why the younger members of Korean culture learn so much and how they conceive of themselves as employees in adult age. The school system also supports lots of work and lots of invested work-hours. Education plays a decisive role in the life of South Korea; large-scale developments targeting education are a decisive contribution to the fast modernisation and development of Korean economy and in particular its companies (Marosi, 2005). In education, the best are considered the level to be reached, and organisations rank hard-working employees the highest.

The interviewees tended to call learning "cramming", as Korean pupils and students keep preparing for a central test exam of utmost importance throughout their student years; their results and ranking at the central exam is the factor determining the admission results and entry to one university or another. Only those who are admitted to the best universities can expect a job for certain in the labour market after graduation.

"Competition is extremely fierce here. That's why parents put such pressure on children. They must go to the best school, develop their abilities from early age. If you graduate from a good university, you have a good family background, if everything is the best, that's when you will have a good job." (Interviewee K)

In the opinion of the interviewees, you will only be hired by the best Korean companies if you have outstanding secondary school and university results and you enjoy the support of your parents. To ensure the best achievements, parents hire private tutors and those who can afford also go to evening school after regular school hours.

"Lots of money is invested in children. They go home at 11 p.m., half-asleep on the bus. No childish laughter, no mischief. Children read books and exercise books, you see no balls or sports equipment anywhere." (Interviewee M)

The Hungarian interviewees found the sight of overworked students shocking. As they told me, when they go home at around nine in the evening, the bus and the metro is full of students. Little sleep and such a busy life was most tiring even for the adult interviewees. They could not understand how a child could bear such a workload with 5-6 hours of sleep. Many thought so much money is spent on private lessons and textbooks that the children are over-taught and they would never use the many things they learn.

The interviewees stressed that for them the family meant recovery and relaxation in everyday life, after working hours. They spoke with a negative overtone of the phenomenon that earning money and a future job could be considered more important than e.g. sharing a dinner with the family.

"If a man works at a big company, he will not see his child, maximum during weekends. Many children grow up like that, without a father. Without a father, while having one close enough to be accessible, but they have no relationship at all." (Interviewee G)

"At our acquaintances, it is the father's role to bathe the young children in the evening. If he arrives home at 9, or drunken at 11 p.m., they would get the sleeping child out of bed for the father to fulfill his role in the family." (Interviewee B)

According to the interviewees, Korean parents can only earn the money they want to spend on the education of their children by even more work, by doing even double shifts. Since too much work prevents that they supervise their children, they are taken care of by the grandparents. Children sometimes spend their early youth in the

countryside and only return to their parents when they have to go to school, and the parents earn the money for their tuition and special lessons in the meantime. Families often take out loans that the children must repay from their salaries throughout their life.

Despite the negative overtone, the Hungarian interviewees raising minor children also considered it the only way to progress to teach the child several languages already at kindergarten to have a competitive edge by the time he goes to school. Several interviewees spoke of male colleagues where the wife and the child of minor age moved to an English-speaking territory for the sake of the future of the child. The father remaining in South Korea assumed multiple workloads to provide financial coverage for this investment.

Parents work even more to provide good possibilities for their children, and dedicate even more hours of work to the firms. Therefore, work predominates over family life, but Koreans do not miss the latter, as their hours of work are driven by strong motivation. Contrary to the Korean examples, in Hungary a young person can find a good job after graduation based on his individual competencies. Hungarian parents with children living in Korea and imagining their future there have realized that this is the key to success there. They work to ensure that their children should not suffer any disadvantage in this competition.

The majority of Hungarian interviewees understood the Korean work ethic that had seemed so strange in the beginning only when they started to get acquainted with Koreans and soon the topic of who was working for which company was raised. Although Korean companies expect a lot from their employees, it is also a merit to work there since the company name on your business card is a decisive factor also in social relationships. Employees of prestigious Korean firms are highly esteemed not only socially, but also financially. The many working hours spent at a company, that is, being a member of the organisation, and also the potential for progress are appreciated in everyday social contacts. Relative positions count a lot in a company, among friends or in choosing your partner for life. So lots of work may aim at occupying as high a position in society as possible.

"In work, the important thing is where you graduated from, what scores you received at the English exam. What you as a person are like, what you as a human being

know, whether you would be a good wife, I feel these are of secondary importance." (Interviewee K)

"In the countryside, whoever we met asked where we came from. We say Korea University. Everyone is amazed how clever we are and how fantastic that is. So respect intensifies, they even bow. I think this is less so in Seoul, but it is considered cool also here." (Intervewee J)

In their little free time after lots of work, Korean employees keep acting like they do at work, according to the Hungarians. For Hungarians, the best way to rest after work is to spend their free time with the family and with friends, outdoors or at home, in the form of excursions, going to the cinema or cooking something together. Koreans, on the other hand, do not relax, but keep "being busy" as if someone would hold them accountable for spending that time usefully.

"If someone goes on holiday, for example, they would not lie on the beach, as we do, but would come over to Europe and visit eight cities in a week. What's the point of that? I don't think they remember anything, but at least they have photos. Then they return to slaving without rest, but can at least show the pictures." (Interviewee C)

Several interviewees mentioned that leisure activities are also taken seriously by Koreans instead of sticking to the hobby/relaxation level. Hungarians told several stories where the nose of participants of a hobby sports event started bleeding or they suffered injury they were trying so hard.

"They are not good at all at relaxing, at feeling good. At home you sit alone or with others on the Danube bank, with a bottle of wine, and there you are. You don't even have to talk about serious things, it is enough to be there and rest. This is not really working with them. They seldom do anything alone." (Interviewee L)

"I have met people who, I felt, simply did not know how to rest." (Intervewee O)

Many Koreans do not even take out their annual leave if they feel that would cause a problem at the company or their work would be missing.

"They think they must work, this is what they are used to. They assume lots of tasks to fill their time somehow. Because if they do not do something, they feel frustrated for having a rest, for doing nothing." (Interviewee D)

Most Hungarians mentioned how frustrating permanent competition seemed to them, and the several among them realised only after protracted spells of illness that they could not stand that speed of things there.

"It was very difficult for me, I got so carried away with this permanent movement, permanent stress, permanent rush. In Seoul, you go out into the streets at dawn, there are people and open shops there. It is very difficult to find any moment when there are no people in the streets, going somewhere, doing something. It can be very tiring." (Interviewee K)

"They cannot so to say slow down, rest, calm down, that is, this speed that is very very different for me, I find it very difficult to live in it sometimes, I get awfully tired." (Interviewee H)

Due to competition, overwork and the wish to meet the expectations, many people suffer from stress in South Korea and alcohol consumption and smoking as a response to stress.

Hungarians admitted that they found it difficult to understand the ideas and drivers underlying these phenomena of organisational life. They mentioned critically that many youth in South Korea refer to the country as Hell Joseon. This recalls the old historical period in Korea that was also most miserable for Koreans due to unemployment and the conditions of work.

One of the discrepancies that Hungarians found most difficult to accept was thus the number of hours spent at work, that did not always imply efficiency and productivity, but sometimes only insistence on the daily routine, a type of behaviour expected by society and by the organisation. I refer to the main code describing a work ethic that is very different from the Hungarian one summarily as "Korean people are industrious ants".

3.3.4 Whatever the boss says is true.

As is discernible from the earlier interview excerpts, hierarchical relations play a decisive role in Korean culture, and loyalty to the family is also important. A similar phenomenon is observable in the organisation when the employee is expected to show full loyalty and allegiance by his superiors. Employees must follow the requests and instructions of their managers without showing any resistance. Confucianism projected the role of the father as strict leader also to the school, the workplace and other groups.

Thus according to the Confucian tenets, the state is no other but an extended family (Osváth, 2003).

"The workplace etiquette, unless you are taught it or you learn it, you will not understand why your boss reacted so strangely to this or that. You must be able to pay him respect and be able to follow him." (Interviewee Q)

In the culture of the Far East, the leader must be a good educator, benevolent, nice, likeable, and the subordinates must demonstrate commitment, devotion and complaisance (Pye, 1985). Employees do what the leader says and in return the leader supervises the subordinates and cares for them.

Most interviewees found it frustrating that Korean leaders communicated decisions and tasks without any reasoning. One could not express objection or even ask questions when the manager assigned such tasks. The interviewees said they would expect more information on the tasks ahead, e.g. such simple things as the reason why they should be done. The interviewees came to the conclusion that whatever the boss said had to be accepted unconditionally.

"I cannot explain anything to a Korean boss to show that I am right, because that is not like that. The boss will either realise that or, if he does not, he will proceed and make a mistake, but you must always keep silent, listen, say yes to everything, you must not say no." (Interviewee I)

"I asked him that I did not understand why so or what the problem was. His answer was that we do not ask questions, you simply have to accept that it is so. You do not understand the task? No problem." (Interviewee C)

"If your boss says do that task. And you say no, their heart stops beating. If you are someone's subordinate at the company, you cannot know better than they do". (Interviewee O)

"The best example I heard was that a Korean airline had had very many accidents, and it was revealed that the technicians did not dare tell their boss that the parts were of bad quality and therefore dangerous. They did not dare disagree." (Interviewee D)

That happened at Korean National Airlines. From 1970 to 1999 they had 16 incidents and accidents. claiming around 700 lives. In most cases the accident was due to

pilot or operation error. International air control obliged the company to change over from the Koran national language to official English, to let air control monitor whether the first officer, so impressed by ranks, would dare oppose the captain in an emergency situation (Gladwell, 2008).

The Hungarian interviewees often missed the opportunity to add their own thoughts to those of their bosses at corporate meetings. Or even to choose an alternative method to solve a problem is the required one did not seem efficient enough. The respondents said their creative thinking and pro-activity had always been appreciated before that everywhere outside South Korea.

"Your opinion, if they ask about it, that is quite rare. It does not happen that you may tell your opinion. They very seldom appreciate it." (Interviewee N)

One of the most critical points according to Hungarians is that there is no flow of information. Several among them explained that theoretically, in Korean culture, a leader would expect that anything would be done for him, because he was the more knowledgeable, the wiser, who was to teach the younger and those of lower ranks. According to the interviewees, managers expect any of their requests to be met "mindlessly", without second thought, but the leader does not provide sufficient information on the tasks and does not explain anything in return. Hungarians said it was very different in the two cultures that there was no learning time or official guidance when employees started a new assignment. They found it frustrating that they were supposed to know certain pieces of information that no one had shared with them, yet they were held accountable afterwards for their lack.

"To me, normally, if I was to do something without asking questions, then they should tell me exactly what it was. But this is not so. I do something without asking questions, something no one had ever told me how it was supposed to be done." (Interviewee M)

"It' s an awful experience to be bollocked at the meeting for having no plan ready. No one had ever told you had to make such a plan, so for example where should you take the numerical data from. Horror." (Interviewee O)

"There are high expectations as to how much you should work and what quality your work should be. The worst is that they do not tell you if you made an error, that for example you did something wrong. You just come across a series of negative remarks and

then you get sacked for it. You should find out yourself what you are expected to do." (Interviewee C)

Several interviewees labelled it the rubber rule that there are no requirements and performance standards specified at the beginning of the work, and even later, rules are easily transgressed if the boss or a higher ranking person gives permission for that. Many reported also that Koreans unilaterally altered what had been agreed on previously.

"They can modify rules even retroactively without any problem, if the situation so requires, so it does not shake their souls." (Interviewee P)

"First it was agreed that we work four hours. Then the boss' demands increased quite markedly. He expected us to do more and more. Whereas this was not what we had agreed on." (Interviewee E)

"They always do as fits them best. They keep mixing and changing everything. They are not sincere. If they want something, they would simply lie in the interest of their goal. They retain information. At home we would call that "shit-stirrer"... hmm, let's correct the previous to "they go halves". Everyone would understand what I mean and it is not so strong." (Interviewee D)

Several Hungarians found also opportunities for creativity in their work. Since instructions must be executed anyway, you must keep trying until you succeed.

"If you cannot do that thing, try it some other way. If you failed to do it one way, you must try at least five or six other ways. You must produce the result by all means." (Interviewee A)

The experience of Hungarian interviewees was that it was expected and considered desirable in Korean organisational life for employees to fulfill the tasks their superiors assigned them without any further questions, by the specified deadline, and to strive to make the best of it. If necessary, finish your work after working hours and by using own solutions, in the interest of the organisation and the leader. I refer to the main code describing the organisational incidents experienced by the Hungarian interviewees by "Whatever the boss says is true".

3.3.5 Even a sheet of paper is lighter when two people lift it.

When they came in contact with Korean culture, the interviewees were pleasantly surprised by how sociable Koreans seemed. In most cases they eat their meals and go out

together. Apparently, they would not let you be lonely. Hungarians wished to have new friends and acquaintances in the new environment, and it was a good experience that Koreans smiled at them in the street and new acquaintances even gave them small presents. The group-organising principles were not always clear to the interviewees, nor the behaviour expected from a group member by the group itself or the "price" of belonging to a group. They learned the advantages and disadvantages of group membership in Korean culture through strange and unpleasant situations.

. *"European cultures are highly focused on the individual, and the individuals are also distinct entities. So I can have my own identity, I can be myself. I connect to the family, friends, the workplace that I chose, but I may also exit (these groups), no big deal. For Koreans, the group will be stronger than the individual. Who you are, what you are is defined by the group." (Interviewee K)*

The respondent Hungarians experienced the intellectual and physical suppression of individuality.

"There is not such a distance and difference between people as I am accustomed to at home. They are much closer to each other. They often send messages and expect you to be always online. If you get say on the bus, they will stand much closer to you also there." (Interviewee B)

Contact with Korean culture implies the suppression of ideas, individual opinions at intellectual level, and also giving up part of your privacy, your own individual physical space in the physical sense. According to the interviewees, family members and friends they had known since early age, and the groups organising around them (sports, hobbies, professional interests) are the most important for Koreans; adults keep in touch most intensively with these people.

According to the Confucian concept, man is not an individual in the first place, but part of humankind, that is, a member of the community. He is bonded to the others by moral bonds: he is defined by his relationships to others (Hahn, 1997). Collectivist cultures subordinate individual goals to group goals, whereas individual cultures put considerable emphasis on individual goals. Therefore, collectivist cultures are often called the culture of "us" as opposed to the individualist culture of "I". Confucianism conceives of man as a member of the community, not as an individual on his own (Osváth, 2003). The priority of the community, the groups, is a typical feature of collectivist

societies. It assumes a system of mutual dependency between the individual and the group: in return for human loyalty, the group provides lifelong protection (Koh, 1986).

According to the interviewees, you cannot be outside the groups or be a member of two groups pursuing the same activity at the same time. The behaviour of the individual is determined most by the forms of conducted supported by the groups; in return, the community provides both membership and protection.

"In Korean pop music, there are various boy and girl formations. They have fans who take that very seriously. In South Korea, it is very difficult to find someone who is a fan of two such groups. Because that is impossible. Therefore, if you are a fan of one group, and especially of you take that very seriously, you cannot be friends with persons who are the fans of another one. At home, you can go to the concerts of twp bands and listen to then, it does not matter how many you like simultaneously. Here you may only like what may be liked according to the group. Then you can wear the group T shits and go to their fan meet-and-greet events." (Interviewee L)

The interviewees found the total suppression of the will of the individual and adaptation to community life, to the opinion of the community and permanent adherence to the latter most exhausting. Hungarians admitted that after an initial period of resistance, they started to adjust to the group themselves for fear of being lonely.

Most interviewees mentioned eating together as an example of being obliged to give up individual needs to have peace in the group. In restaurants, those at the table always order together and the dishes are served on common plates. Everyone has a small bowl to pick whatever they like from the plates.

"I did not want to eat meat that day, I wasn't in the mood. I said I would order something for myself separately. Those heads... Then my friend told me in a low voice that I should not act like that, be so selfish as to want to eat from a separate plate there." (Interviewee A)

"My colleagues had warned me already at the start that I should not go alone to eat, because even going in alone is embarrassing." (Interviewee N)

In Korean restaurants there are usually no one-person meals, the minimum is two persons, for group orders are placed. In some restaurants opening nowadays it is not a shame to go alone and they give portions that you can eat also alone. Three interviewees

had already tried such places. They said they did not have a good time there. It was strange to go in, they felt others watched them closely.

They said common eating and drinking are decisive phenomena and programs in Korean culture. They told several stories that instead of greeting and inquiring about your health, as is usual for Hungarians, when they met Koreans, the conversation was often opened by questions like when they had last ate and whether they were not hungry. Efforts are made to attribute the specifics of Korean language to a patriarchal, agrarian and collectivist culture: in the village communities, in everyday contacts, it was important for the peasants to learn about each other's state of health, mood, and the purposes of actions (Suh, 1996). Most proposed programs also relate to meals.

"I was set back seriously and felt awfully uncomfortable when I refused a meal proposed by someone, a pure reflex, and I saw on the other's face what a deep impression that made. I had to get used to eating not when I was hungry, but when they asked and invited me." (Interviewee J)

"At home it was OK that we used a common box of butter. But here in the beginning social meals were a problem to me. Compulsory meals during workplace negotiations, with acquaintances. I find it difficult to sit down to a table with just anyone. To me, a meal is a more private thing." (Interviewee O)

Many interviewee reported it as a positive thing that since eating is a crucial issue for Koreans, they never went hungry and were never lonely at their meals. There was always someone who invited them, helped them decide what to order and how certain dishes were to be eaten.

Sharing time with colleagues and managers after official working hours is an integral part of life at the workplace in Korea. The purpose of such time together is team building, strengthening team spirit and the feeling that they are one big family. This generally means shared meals and in most cases drinks. The leader demonstrates caring for the others by inviting them and the subordinates show their loyalty and team player role by accepting. If the leader invites the subordinates for such an occasion after work, they must not say no. Hungarians said it was commendable not to make any specific evening program in advance, as a leader could come up with the idea of organising an evening program any time.

"It is compulsory to participate. Often the boss alone had a good time, we did not have a good time. Never. We only went once a month, on payment day. We could hardly wait for it to end and to be over with it." (Interviewee I)

"With a family, this is difficult to do. It was a permanent topic of debate with my wife. But it is very hard to say no. If you only go, they will force you to eat, you again cannot say no." (Interviewee D)

"Koreans think if you drink a little you will be more relaxed and they will be able to get to know you better and rely on you more. Drink is thus good because it strengthens connections." (Interviewee H)

The interviewees found the mandatory common meals and drinking organised after working hours to strengthen company behaviour and keep up the group frustrating.

"They think if you drink a little you will be more relaxed and they will be able to get to know you better and rely on you more. That's a joke, because in my opinion if there is a group and they meet on a spontaneous basis, say have lunch together, it will become clear after a while whether they like each other's company or not. Our contacts strengthen on their own. But they want to actively strengthen them somehow. Obviously, part of Koreans do not like that, because this essentially means that they eat something, get drunk and sing karaoke. They are drunk until dawn, then work the next day." (Interviewee I)

Koreans thud consider sharing drinks a common experience where informal and more relaxed communication may bring people closer to each other. They get to know each other better and that the community can be built up. It is part of more informal communication that you do not have to observe the levels of politeness so closely, and informal conversations outside the company have no effect on life at the workplace. Hungarians found this community-building strange because due to its compulsory nature, they behaved at such occasions more tensely, and waited eagerly for the moment when they could leave.

"Alcohol is important; they can only be at ease that way. If they drink and are at ease, they think, the other will do the same. Then the other's true self will come to light, and they will see who they are with. That is, under normal circumstances, they are very reserved, very reticent, but if they drink, they find it easy to speak and communicate themselves." (Interviewee F)

"It happened that my colleague actually told the boss he was stupid, but he only laughed at him, he was so drunk. The next day we were afraid what would happen, but nothing happened. The boss either did not or did not want to remember. So nothing happened." (Interviewee A)

The interviewees mentioned as part of the normal urban night scenery that well-dressed men and women who probably went to have a drink with their colleagues on their way home stagger home or sleep on the ground, on benches. Hungarians, however, said the positive thing was that this could be done because you can walk the streets in Seoul even at night without feeling threatened.

"The interesting thing was that in a public place everyone keeps very quite, not to disturb the others. This is one position, and the other is when they drink, they hug and roam the streets, they will also shout and the girls complain that they get harassed at such clubs. Alcohol actually triggers their suppressed stimuli and desires." (Interviewee G)

The respondent Hungarians spoke of two kinds of extra-group statuses. Being outside the group, among Koreans who do not know each other, in the streets, for example, and being a foreigner outside the big Korean group.

Koreans unknown to each other do not greet each other or smile at each other in the street, as is usual in Hungary for the interviewees. Hungarians mentioned it as a negative experience that they often closed the door in front of the other, hustle, they pushed ("elbowed") ahead in the mass, pushed ahead in a queue, di not say excuse me if they stepped on someone's foot in the metro or the bus.

"In the street, people pay no attention to each other, they try to assert themselves and compete even in who gets on the metro first and who can sit down. I see these everyday minor competitions." (Interviewee K)

Several Hungarian interviewees came to understand during their stay in Korea that this phenomenon simply means that the man in the street is alien to Koreans, an outsider to the group, they have neutral feelings towards them. Helping the alien getting in difficulties, for example, demonstrates marked unselfishness and therefore Hungarians felt high respect when Koreans helped them in a conflict situation out of their free will.

According to the interviewees, Koreans showed an ambiguous behaviour when they met a member of a foreign culture, not a Korean. Neither does Confucianism, the decisive doctrine of this culture, provide any guidance in this regard. On the one hand,

Koreans are reluctant to let aliens (in the sense of extra-terrestrial to Korea) among themselves, but they can be infinitely nice and affectionate with outsiders in the context of some superficial acquaintance. Hungarians are of the opinion that it takes a long time for Koreans to let someone among themselves, firmly convinced as they are that the best is always what is made in Korea, what belongs to Korean culture. They are most reluctant to let aliens in, to give them an insight into their own inner life.[26]

"Seoul is not inclusive, because they do not even try to make things easier for foreigners. They do not really try to adapt or even to help a little, facilitate things for those working there. They do not really try to do that." (Interviewee Q)

"At the place where I worked, I felt most intensively that I was treated otherwise than Korean girls. Korean girls were regularly rebuked, but I was left out. They were much more tolerant with me. If they did not like something in my work, they preferred to keep it quiet, smiling at me as if it had not happened." (Interviewee L)

Tourists who look American or European are often addressed in the metro and the bus by Koreans who talk to tem and sometimes even invite them to have a common photo taken. Koreans consider foreigners American as a rule, and identify the West and the United States.

"The American flag, baseball matches, hamburger, these are highly popular, and music industry has also become completely Americanised, you hear hip-hop everywhere, they dress and speak lie that, it makes its effects felt very strongly. I found it surprising that so far almost everyone had heard about Budapest and they knew where Hungary lay. They are usually happy about it, so if there are several foreigners and someone asks where each among us came, and I say Budapest, that's a good point usually." (Interviewee M)

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[26] One of my most interesting experiences and best learning point was when I asked the interviewees about their feelings, whether they had already been accepted by the Koreans. Have they made it to the inner group? This question seemed quite natural to me since the research targeted the better understanding of culture and this apparently required a deeper kind of friendship with Koreans on the side of the Hungarians.

The answers were highly different, and I felt this question set back the process of telling stories and experiences quite markedly. Many interviewees suddenly spoke of crises in partner relations and with friends, others became sad and confused. Therefore, I decided not to ask this question any more in the later interviews (meaning around half of the interviewees). This question may be highly relevant in another research with appropriate focus.

One interviewee was of the opinion that the reason why they sympathize with Hungarians is that similarly to South Korea, Hungarians had also suffered a lot from occupying foreign powers.

There are differences in their judgment of various cultures in the opinion of Hungarians. They like Hungarians and those coming from European countries, and in particular tall, lean and bespectacled people at first sight. They are not so very hospitable with people coming from the poorer parts of Asia. Some interviewees explained that by saying that South Korea works a lot to become a prosperous country and therefore they are nice with the countries they would like to be similar to, and less friendly with the less wealthy ones. Interestingly, as many as four interviewees mentioned that their young Korean acquaintances warned them not to wear too much make-up because they would look like Russian girls. Koreans identify Russian girls with excessive make-up with prostitutes.

Interestingly, the conduct of Korean expatriates arriving to Hungary is also ambiguous. On the one hand, Hungarian interviewees have confirmed that they form a closed community where they do not like to have non-Koreans, and they adhere to their Korean habits of eating and drinking.

"There is Korean food at every office party, because the managers would only eat that." (Interviewee Q)

Expatriates adhere to the usual Korean patterns also in terms of leadership style and communication with the staff: they observe the hierarchy and expect obedience to the leaders. However, those who come here behave more freely. They exploit their distance from their family and culture more intensively. They take their periods of leave, keep to the Hungarian average in terms of working hours and often organise programs away from the organisation.

The typical Koran identifies with the group he belongs to, and his every step is guided by the requirements in effect of that group. Koreans are a highly situation-dependent people (Gudykunst-Kim, 1997). I refer to the main code describing behaviour within and without a group by "Even a sheet of paper is lighter when two people lift it".

3.3.6 Shame will accompany you through life.

The specifics of Korean culture as compared to the Hungarian one mentioned frequently by the interviewees were the high number of working hours and permanent rivalry for occupying higher positions in society. As we have seen already, Koreans hold social status in high esteem, as it provides social standing and may secure the future of even a whole family. Therefore, they fear that social rank and position awarded by others may be jeopardised.

"Face" in the Asian sense is social status and moral character in one; Western languages could cover it best by the concepts of "humility", "status", "reputation" and "social acceptance" (Carr, 1993). According to Choi and Kim (2000) there are two fundamental factors behind this term: self-fulfillment and the desire for social success and acceptance. By loss of face, Korean people mean they do not meet the expectations of society and are therefore considered less desirable in society (Kim-Yang, 2013). Saving your face is thus equally about one's social position, reputation, influence, dignity and honour. Koreans consider their (social) face important; they protect it carefully and take it very badly if that face, that image, suffers any negative effect; they are definitely sensitive to public humiliation (Lias, 2015).

The interviewees said Koreans often smiled in situations considered unpleasant by Hungarians. They were of the opinion that they tried to reduce the negative emotions inherent in the situation, to save their conversation partners from feeling uncomfortable. Their experience was that Koreans tried to avoid contradicting the other party also out of politeness.

"What we do at home, like telling each other, hey, your coat is ugly, or let me go, that does not happen here. In the beginning, my head was spinning, I was trying so hard to figure out what they could be thinking." (Interviewee N)

"Among friends, they are sincere to a certain level, but I often found it very difficult to crack the puzzle of what they might be thinking when they said a certain thing." (Interviewee G)

According to the dimensions of culture defined by Hall, South Korea is thus typically one of the high-context cultures: instead of direct communication, speakers tend to send more messages by their utterances than by what is expressed in words.

"They tell you things without actually saying what they mean, you have to find that out yourself. I had a colleague with whom we went to a conference, and I caught sight of him, and saw he was just preparing for his presentation by reading his notes. He said he saw a very good café on the first floor. I said OK, but I have already had my coffee. And then my colleague proposed again to have coffee. I said I have already had one. But he still wanted to send me there. I realised later that this had nothing to do with having coffee. He simply wanted to say I should disappear because he was busy. He would not say he had no time because he was busy, because that would not have been polite." (Interviewee H)

The interviewees said they assumed they understood why leaders in an organisation behaved as they did. Those at higher hierarchical levels did not want to make themselves uncomfortable by (explicitly) not knowing something or being wrong. As indicated already, the older is also the wiser in Korean culture; the one in possession of knowledge who will teach the younger. A Far Eastern person expects other properties, capabilities and behaviour from his boss than a Western one. It must not be that he is humiliated by someone who is at a lower level in the hierarchy.

"I had a subject I had to complete and it was indicated that it was in English and foreign students had to enroll there. When I went to the lesson, the teacher asked if I spoke Korean. I said no. He told me that discussions during the lesson would be in Korean, only the presentation would be held in English. So I cannot take part in a meaningful way, so he asks me to leave. The lesson started and he asked me to go, leave the lesson, because he would not speak English. I heard his English was very poor. I think he simply did not want to speak English in the presence of foreign students." (Interviewee M)

"They do not confess anything, they shun things completely. At our place the boss has committed several errors, simply because he is also human, but he has simply blamed others. For example, he blames me, because now this is the simplest thing to do and he cannot afford to have a subordinate who does something better. I, on the other hand, must tolerate that." (Interviewee I)

Hungarians came across two types of conduct in the conflict management strategies of Koreans. Depending on the quality of the conflict, Koreans will get angry easily and will even scold you in loud voice. Sometimes they even use physical gestures to emphasise their anger, hitting the other's shoulder or back.

"Well, yes that can be disconcerting at first. But it does not mean they are as angry as that also internally. It is just their way of expressing what is happening. To someone not accustomed to that, this may be rather strange on the first occasion, they will be wondering whether the boss is really as angry as that or they actually did something as bad as that." (Interviewee C)

In the opposite Korean conflict management behaviour, you will not even know that the other is angry or a conflict is emerging at all.

"If you can interpret the way he is speaking, or his body language or the situation itself. That is, if you interpret it well, you will know you are likely to be in trouble. But if you cannot read these signs well, you may land in most unpleasant situations." (Interviewee A)

"In a Christian congregation I visited there were several youth groups and a group with relatively older people. They were working and did not have so much time to meet on weekdays in the evening. They told me lots of time during the three years that this was the idea of their pastor, and they would have preferred not to do that. But no one ever told the pastor it was not good for them. They rather did not go to the events or avoided speaking to the pastor. I don't know if the pastor had finally found out what message they wanted to convey to him by doing so." (Interviewee K)

Hungarians are of the opinion that Koreans do their utmost to avoid any situation where they could be humiliated explicitly or their mistakes would be disclosed. They also do their best not to ask for help explicitly. Contrary to the Western languages, tension and anger is expressed in Korean not by showing emotions and raising your voice in communication, but by reducing the level of politeness of your speech (Sohn, 1986)

However, there are situations where the individual is nevertheless humiliated or, as those in the Asian countries would put it, lose face in front of others. Group cohesion introduced above means that not only the individual, but the family, the given group also share that feeling, they wil feel responsible for the shame. This perceptibly implies huge expectations and pressure for the behaviour of Koreans. The interviewees have told me that the news mentioned suicides every day. Some escape from debt this way, but a company leader may also commit suicide if his company committed something shameful. Hungarians were most shocked by student suicides.

"During the main exams, there is a student committing suicide by jumping from a skyscraper every day. I do not understand that. It is not the end of your life if you are not admitted to university. It has happened to me twice, so what.... Life goes on. I find this completely senseless here." (Interviewee L)

The Hungarians interviewees have also referred to the daily newspaper articles on suicides. Most youth jump from sky-scrapers at the time of the central exams (corresponding to Hungarian GCSE/admission exam), because they feel they did not prepare for their exams well enough or the results do not meet the requirements they are supposed to fulfill. There are pieces of news about businessmen and fathers of families who take such decision due to some business failure, to avoid shame. The relevant statistics confirm this phenomenon: South Korea has 10. position in the world list of suicides.

The interviewees said Koreans do their best to engage in light conversations and avoid insulting or embarrassing their partner or dishonour anyone. They agreed that Koreans are excellent conversationalists and they keep smiling in an effort to bring good feelings into their conversations. On the other hand, Hungarians considered it a major task to understand what Koreans really thought and to synchronise their utterances and the underlying thoughts. This characteristic of Korean culture is referred to by the main code called "Shame will accompany you through life".

3.3.7 Even if you know the way, ask one more time.

According to the reports of the interviewees, members of Korean culture do not like to depart from the established and habitual ways. They are embarrassed or become frustrated in any situation that is unpredictable and requires a solution differing from the usual one. The majority of Hungarians in the sample had experienced a situation where they were explained what the desirable solution algorithm was at the workplace or at school. Whenever the solution was not as expected by the Koreans, they often said that things were not like that in Korea and other methods were "nonsense".

"I have the feeling that they think the really good things are Korean, whereas what comes from the outside is a bit suspicious, and cannot be that good. They would say 'that is very good, very good, but not like the Korean (solution)'." (Interviewee B)

Cultures with a strong tendency to avoid uncertainty are characterised by high stress levels, rigid formal rules and fear from anything unusual (Gudykunst-Kim, 1997). "What is different, is dangerous" -- this is how Hofstede summarises the approach of uncertainty avoidance cultures. To reduce their sense of uncertainty, the members of Korean culture resign themselves to the existing natural and social order and adjust to it. For the same reason, they avoid verbal confrontation and conflicts.

Another experience of the interviewees was that Koreans like to have clear instructions and rules in every respect, and they almost freeze when there is a need for creative thinking. This may be attributable to the many tests they do at secondary school and university, but own opinions may also be dangerous as they might differ from the opinions of the group.

"Everyone thinks in systems. In Budapest and here, too, there are coupons at McDonald's that let you buy something cheaper. At home, if you get one or if you don't have one or don't have it on you or have a single one, but you ask two, they will give that to you. Or you ask for a coupon booklet, they give you three because it does not matter to them. Here, no way. They don't even understand the assumption that I might get three. It is stated that each person will get one and only one and only after buying something, so each person gets one and that is it." (Interviewee M)

"I really like that the whole airplane smells of kimchi[27] *when we come home. Koreans bring it with them, because it does not exist in Europe." (Interviewee N)*

The South Korean education system clearly reflects uncertainty avoidance in South Korea. It is theory, rather than practice oriented. Pupils/students expect and even demand precise instructions by their teachers from primary school to university. They give more emphasis to teaching theories and fact data than to discussions.

Hungarians say Koreans deem the designated holidays and anniversaries highly important. Half among them made it to a feast featuring some traditional celebration such as a wedding or a funeral, and most perceived some signs of such events.

"When you have to visit the dead, like in Hungary on 1st November, the whole country is on the move, there are traffic jams even on the highways. Everyone goes home, even if they had not been there for a year." (Interviewee F)

[27] The most popular food in Korean cuisine. Its key components are Chinese cabbages, radish, spring onions and cucumbers. Kimchi is made by fermentation.

I refer to the main code describing the behaviour characterised by uncertainty avoidance and adherence to rules and rituals as “Even if you know the way, ask one more time”.

3.3.8 Good clothes are like growing wings.

The stories presented on the basis of the perception and explanations of respondent Hungarians clearly showed how important appearance was to members of Korean culture. The image made of them counts; the opinion of others is more important than their own. This is due to the desire for external beauty, and also to the realisation that well-dressed, beautiful, shame-free people can be more successful whether in terms of placement or marriage. External appearance is therefore a key component in the contest for social status and it comprises, in addition to appearance in the strict sense, also the opinion of others. “Koreans are more concerned by what others think of them than by their own opinion of themselves” (Sohn, 1986).

The artistic representation of Korean culture is very strongly present in South Korea. All of the interviewees mentioned in one way or another that they could get information on Korean culture before their life there, because it was accessible. Korean movies, series and music addressing the domestic audience in Korean have an enormous market. Korean language has spread quite significantly also outside South Korea, and Koreans are very proud of that. Talented people with outstanding performance and outstanding natural assets and objects are awarded the title of “National Treasure”, and Koreans appreciate that and are more proud of that than of any similar foreign achievement.

The appearance of their culture, their country is an important factor for Koreans. It is no coincidence that Korean culture as presented abroad is somewhat different from that experienced in real life. South Korea is keen on showing its best face to the outside world. The interviewees did not see anything wrong with that, they only mentioned that the world portrayed in Korean drama and the feelings suggested by Korean pop culture are different in everyday life, when someone is living there.

“Korea loves to show a good picture of itself, one that is highly ideal, very beautiful and exciting so, obviously, the quality of grey everyday life is very difficult to see. They are also reluctant to show that to foreigners.” (Interviewee Q)

"They simply want to paint a better picture of themselves." (Interviewee D)

All interviewees found that beauty, external appearance and neatness were important for Koreans.

"In my opinion, this is a social requirement. They have ideas as to who is beautiful. Everyone wants to look the same, everyone wants to conform to this ideal." (Interviewee N)

"They give excessive emphasis to externalities." (Interviewee K)

"A person I know told that a Korean acquaintance of his in Hungary had quite a good time in Hungary. Not a particularly handsome or good-looking guy, but quite normal. He told my girlfriend that unfortunately he had to go back to Korea and look for a job there, and he would not find work with a face like that. So he had to find out what to do. I think that's quite rough that they are capable of, say, having their face redesigned to get work." (Interviewee H)

Several interviewees mentioned that Seoul is full of mirrors and reflective surfaces where people can check how they look. Samsung was the first phone with the whole back cover being a mirror surface, and the Korean market is full also of special photo techniques that make e.g. the face look thinner in photos.

"In the metro, the street, on the bus, wherever there is a reflective surface, people stop and start looking at themselves, arranging their hair, amazing. In the boys' room, you cannot wash your hands because boys arrange their hair and put up makeup after washing their hands. It happens that I have to queue to get there, to get to the tap to wash my hands. At home I would be laughed at for that." (Interviewee A)

What is interesting in appearance is the ideal Koreans would like to resemble, that they find beautiful. In addition to white skin, a sign of the desired notability in Asian countries, the ideal appearance includes also traits resembling those of Europeans, Americans. In Asian countries, traditionally, only the members of the elite could afford not to grow rice and work in the fields where they got bronzed. This is the reason why Koreans try to avoid the sun and even use makeup products to whiten their skin.

"Koreans go to the beach fully dressed. Everyone puts on sunglasses, a hat and use umbrellas to sun-bathe. I ask why go to the beach then?" (Interviewee J)

There is a high number of plastic surgeries and other cosmetic surgeries in South Korean to attain the European, American ideal of beauty. Eyelid surgery, nose-magnifying and face-narrowing surgeries are highly popular among Koreans.

"You see ads on plastic surgery everywhere. Most young people get that as a GCSE or graduation present." (Interviewee L)

"My favourite is the mother-daughter plastic surgery as a joint program, at a discount. I imagine myself saying to my mother, Mother, join me for a Saturday program." (Interviewee K)

Hungarians were often praised for their European looks, large eyes and big nose.

"When I was first told what a nice big nose I had I could not respond right away. But now I already know that's not meant as an affront but as a compliment." (Interviewee F)

As we have seen, Koreans avoid confrontation and putting the conversation partner to shame. Hungarians found it strange that they were openly praised for things in their appearance that seemed natural at home. One must see that Koreans use this as a sincere compliment, they do not intend to offend you.

"They love the look of westerners. They like our looks, the structure of our face." (Interviewee I)

In addition to looks, clothing, wearing quality and branded pieces is also typical of Koreans according to Hungarians.

"It is not easy to tell from the way they are dressed or from their looks which social group they belong to. Everyone wants to dress like those in the highest groups, that's why they buy luxury bags, wrist-watches, jewels." (Interviewee G)

"Fashion is very important, you see that everyone is well-dressed. All kinds of global brands are present, shopping works amazingly here. They have shopping malls say eight times Westend plaza. There are four-five such shopping malls side by side, under or above ground, where you can go shopping until five in the morning, and everyone keeps buying clothes, from the cheapest to the most expensive." (Interviewee M)

I refer to the main code describing the importance of external things and to appearance "Good clothes are like growing wings".

3.4 SUMMARY OF THE IDENTIFIED CULTURAL DISPARITIES

During the research providing the basis of the thesis I strove to answer the research questions with the help of the conclusions drawn from the data I obtained (Krippendorff, 2003). The general goal of the research was to examine the processes triggered by the encounter of Hungarian and South Korean culture. To explore the differences, presumably of cultural origin, in the thinking and interpretation patterns of members of Hungarian culture, based on their actual interaction with members of South Korean culture.

During the research I assumed that there exists an objective reality and the mechanisms defining how the world works can be understood on the basis of the facts observable there. The main goal of the research was thus to explain the invisible mechanisms of the disparities of the two cultures based on visible action, and to find out what forces drive the events at the level of reality (Lawson, 1989, quoted in Primecz, 1999). Moreover, I accepted in the context of the research that research findings are always influenced by the subjectivity of the researcher.

It was a precondition to have expatriate interviewees living and working in the researched culture, with opportunities for personal contacts with the members of the local culture (Romani et al. 2004). The sample included persons having their habitual residence in the foreign culture and persons living in their own culture, but working with representatives of the foreign culture on a permanent basis (Topcu, 2005). The sample included 13 women and 5 men; 9 people lived in Korea, and 9 in Hungary at the time of the interview. Sampling produced audio recordings of around 16 hours and some 350 pages of interview transcripts.

The transcription of the voice recordings is already suitable for coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Qualitative content analysis applies a systematic coding system to analyse the content of text data, and makes it possible to identify the topics in the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005 cited by Kovács, 2017). One can draw valid conclusions in a reproducible way from the texts concerned with its help. The coding system makes it possible for the researcher to arrange the data into an analyzable system (Krippendorff, 1989). In the research, codes were assigned primarily to paragraphs and secondarily to

sentences. The Nvivo software assisting qualitative research was of great help to me during coding. The software supports data coding, the interpretation of information gathered, the identification and assessment of theories and the visual representation of results.

The goal of the observation of the phenomena was to understand the deep structure, i.e. the mechanisms that drive the actual level of reality. The argumentation relied on metaphors, if possible metaphors known to the audience (readers) already (Peters, 1997 quoted by Primecz, 1999); therefore, I assigned a Korean saying to each of the main codes I identified during the analysis, to make them clearer. Each main code includes several sub-codes. The sub-codes have no names or labels, but their introductory explanation always includes interview excerpts.

The goal of the research was to find out what types of disparities (allegedly of cultural origin) were experienced by the Hungarian interviewees during their interactions with South Koreans, how they interpreted them and what factors and values they attributed them to. By identifying the main codes associated with Korean proverbs, seven presumably cultural disparities were distinguished.

1. One tiger by family, and you will have order.
2. Korean people are industrious ants.
3. Whatever the boss says is true.
4. Even a sheet of paper is lighter when two people lift it.
5. Shame will accompany you through life.
6. Even if you know the way, ask one more time.
7. Good clothes are like growing wings.

1. One tiger by family, and you will have order.

The most frequently mentioned experience of Hungarian interviewees relates to hierarchy as it is discernible and present in Korean society. In the opinion of the interviewees, in communication and in everyday situations, Koreans always considered first of all their (hierarchical) relationship to each other. In line with the Confucian values, interpersonal relationships exist in the framework of hierarchical relations. In Confucian cultures, social inequality is not only expected, but actually desirable. The stability of

Asian society stems from respect shown by the younger to the older and the obligation of the older to advise to the younger (Hofstede and Bond, 1988). Female interviewees were more sensitive about the differences in the male and female roles experienced in Korea culture. The interviewees said that, as women and youngsters, they were multiply underprivileged even in such everyday business dealings as going to a shop or the bank. Hierarchy is intensively present also in the family relationships. In addition to age, behaviour and respect within the family is determined by the relationship of the family members to each other. Parents bring up their children who then provide for and support them in old age. Parents do everything to care for their children, and the responsibilities of the child include, in addition to obedience, also good learning results and coping at school. Social status, so important in South Korea, as well as educational attainment and career prospects play a prominent role in choosing your partner. A well-chosen partnership/marriage is important to Koreans as a means to improve the future of the family financially and also in terms of social status. I refer to the main code describing the strong hierarchy present among the members of society and of an organisation, manifesting itself along the dimensions of old/young, man/woman and mother-in-law/daughter-in-law as "One tiger by family, and you will have order".

2. Korean people are industrious ants.

Hungarians asked in the interviews spoke of workplace performance expected by the Korean organisations and of the expected employee behaviour. They were surprised by overtime and weekend work being taken for granted after a daily 14-15 hours of work. As shown by the quotation "Hard work to the point of exhaustion is required to be able to avoid the risks of the unpredictable world" (Kim, 1969), in Korean culture hard work is the means of avoiding uncertainty among other things. In the opinion of the interviewees, the Koran organisation considers not only the number of hours spent at work, but also the dedication of the employee, keeping the interests of the company in mind, highly desirable. Hungarian interviewees expressed differing views on whether the high number of working hours actually meant efficiency in practice. Long hours of work did not mean for them that time was actually spent by uninterrupted work. Hungarians considered the impetus experienced in Korean workers and their individual sacrifices for the organisation strange. Korean employees sacrifice their rest period, family time, for building their Korean company. They do not relax, but keep "being busy" as if someone would hold them accountable for spending that time usefully. One of the discrepancies

that Hungarians found most difficult to accept was thus the number of hours spent at work,that did not always imply efficiency and productivity, but sometimes only insistence on the daily routine, a type of behaviour expected by society and by the organisation. I refer to the main code describing a work ethic that is very different from the Hungarian one summarily as “Korean people are industrious ants”.

3. Whatever the boss says is true.

Hierarchical relations play a decisive role in Korean culture, and loyalty to the family is also important. A similar phenomenon is observable in the organisation when the employee is expected to show full loyalty and allegiance by his superiors. Employees must follow the requests and instructions of their managers without showing any resistance. In the culture of the Far East, the leader must be a good educator, benevolent, nice, likeable, and the subordinates must demonstrate commitment, devotion and complaisance (Pye, 1985). Employees do what the leader says and in return the leader supervises the subordinates and cares for them. Most interviewees found it frustrating that Korean leaders communicated decisions and tasks without any reasoning. One could not express objection or even ask questions when the manager assigned such tasks. The interviewees came to the conclusion that whatever the boss said had to be accepted unconditionally. The experience of Hungarian interviewees was that it was expected and considered desirable in Korean organisational life for employees to fulfill their tasks without any questions, by the specified deadline, and to strive to make the best of it. If necessary, finish your work after working hours and by using own solutions, in the interest of the organisation and the leader. I refer to the main code describing the organisational incidents experienced by the Hungarian interviewees as “Whatever the boss says is true”.

4. Even a sheet of paper is lighter when two people lift it.

When they came in contact with Korean culture, the interviewees were pleasantly surprised by how sociable Koreans seemed. In most cases they eat their meals and go out together. Apparently, they would not let you be lonely. The group-organising principles were not always clear to the interviewees, nor the behaviour expected from a group member by the group itself or the “price” of belonging to a group. They learned the advantages and disadvantages of group membership in Korean culture through strange and unpleasant situations. Confucianism conceives of man as a member of the

community, not as an individual on his own (Osváth, 2003). He is bonded to the others by moral bonds: he is defined by his relationships to others (Hahn, 1997). Collectivist cultures subordinate individual goals to group goals, whereas individual cultures put considerable emphasis on individual goals. The priority of the community, the groups, is a typical feature of collectivist societies. It assumes a system of mutual dependency between the individual and the group: in return for human loyalty, the group provides lifelong protection (Koh, 1986). Most interviewees mentioned eating together as an example of being obliged to give up individual needs to have peace in the group. Sharing time with colleagues and managers after official working hours is an integral part of life at the workplace in Korea. The purpose of such time together is team building, strengthening team spirit and the feeling that they are one big family. This generally means shared meals and in most cases drinks. The leader demonstrates caring for the others by inviting them and the subordinates show their loyalty and team player role by accepting. If the leader invites the subordinates for such an occasion after work, they must not say no. According to the interviewees, Koreans showed an ambiguous behaviour when they met a member of a foreign culture, not a Korean. On the one hand, Koreans are reluctant to let aliens (in the sense of extra-terrestrial to Korea) among themselves, but they can be infinitely nice and affectionate with outsiders in the context of some superficial acquaintance. Hungarians are of the opinion that it takes a long time for Koreans to let someone among themselves, firmly convinced as they are that the best is always what is made in Korea, what belongs to Korean culture. They are most reluctant to let aliens in, to give them an insight into their own inner life. The typical Koran identifies with the group he belongs to, and his every step is guided by the requirements in effect of that group. Koreans are a highly situation-dependent people (Gudykunst-Kim, 1997). I refer to the main code describing behaviour within and without a group by "Even a sheet of paper is lighter when two people lift it".

5. Shame will accompany you through life.

Koreans hold social status in high esteem, as it provides social standing and may secure the future of even a whole family. Therefore, they fear that social rank and position awarded by others may be jeopardised. "Face" in the Asian sense is social status and moral character in one; Western languages could cover it best by the concepts of "humility", "status", "reputation" and "social acceptance" (Carr, 1993). According to Choi and Kim (2000) there are two fundamental factors behind this term: self-fulfillment

and the desire for social success and acceptance. By loss of face, Korean people mean they do not meet the expectations of society and are therefore considered less desirable in society (Kim-Yang, 2013). Saving your face is thus equally about one's social position, reputation, influence, dignity and honour. Koreans consider their (social) face important; they protect it carefully and take it very badly if that face, that image, suffers any negative effect; they are definitely sensitive to public humiliation (Lias, 2015). Those at higher hierarchical levels did not want to make themselves uncomfortable by (explicitly) not knowing something or being wrong. As indicated already, the older is also the wiser in Korean culture; the one in possession of knowledge who will teach the younger. A Far Eastern person expects other properties, capabilities and behaviour from his boss than a Western one. It must not be that he is humiliated by someone who is at a lower level in the hierarchy. Hungarians are of the opinion that Koreans do their utmost to avoid a situation where they could be humiliated explicitly or their mistakes would be disclosed. However, there are situations where the individual is nevertheless humiliated or, as those in the Asian countries would put it, lose face in front of others. Group cohesion introduced above means that not only the individual, but the family, the given group also share that feeling, they wil feel responsible for the shame. This perceptibly implies huge expectations and pressure for the behaviour of Koreans. This characteristic of Korean culture is referred to by the main code called "Shame will accompany you through life".

6. Even if you know the way, ask one more time.

According to the reports of the interviewees, members of Korean culture do not like to depart from the established and habitual ways. They are embarrassed or become frustrated in any situation that is unpredictable and requires a solution differing from the usual one. The majority of Hungarians in the sample had experienced a situation where they were explained what the desirable solution algorithm was at the workplace or at school. Cultures with a strong tendency to avoid uncertainty are characterised by high stress levels, rigid formal rules and fear from anything unusual (Gudykunst-Kim, 1997). "What is different, is dangerous" -- this is how Hofstede summarises the approach of uncertainty avoidance cultures. To reduce their sense of uncertainty, the members of Korean culture resign themselves to the existing natural and social order and adjust to it. For the same reason, they avoid verbal confrontation and conflicts. I refer to the main code describing the behaviour characterised by uncertainty avoidance and adherence to rules and rituals as "Even if you know the way, ask one more time".

7. Good clothes are like growing wings.

The stories presented on the basis of the perception and explanations of respondent Hungarians clearly showed how important appearance was to members of Korean culture. The image made of them counts; the opinion of others is more important than their own. This is due to the desire for external beauty, and also to the realisation that well-dressed, beautiful, shame-free people can be more successful whether in terms of placement or marriage. External appearance is therefore a key component in the contest for social status and it comprises, in addition to appearance in the strict sense, also the opinion of others. "Koreans are more concerned by what others think of them than by their own opinion of themselves" (Sohn, 1986). I refer to the main code describing the importance of external things and to appearance "Good clothes are like growing wings".

In the opinion of Hall (1960) culture can be observed in patterns considered self-evident by the members of the given culture. The basic hypotheses that are indispensible for the existence of a culture and imply the methods of the most efficient treatment of environmental challenges lie in the deepest, inner, implicit layer of culture (Trompenaars-Hampden-Turner, 1997). The specifics of the world view carried by a culture define its values. Family, school and religious groups all contribute to transmitting the typical world view of a culture from one generation to another (Park, 1999). The context of the research was provided by Confucianism, the decisive school of thought of the cultures of the Far East. They believe that everything has its proper order in human society as in the universe. To achieve social order, and peace and harmony within it, each individual should know his proper place in society and assume the relevant responsibilities. They named the halo underlying the social roles and society the "five relationships (or bonds)" reflecting reciprocity and a sense of responsibility. The basic Confucian social principles include separation by gender, age hierarchy, the unity of the family, the continuity of descent and veneration of the dead. According to Confucian teachings, family relationships represent the basis in social relationships and family values are also the values of society (Kim, 1969). Confucius considered preserving the traditions. i.e. performing the rites, critical. This spiritual behaviour consisted of respect, courtesy, self-control and avoiding uneducated behaviour on the one hand and observing the forms of politeness, rituals and customs developed by morality on the other (Park, 1999).

The main codes I identified made the values and beliefs based on the specifics of the Eastern Confucian world view visible. The ideals of hierarchy in society, in the

organisation and in the family, and that of gender inequality appeared in “One tiger by family and you will have order” and “Whatever the boss says is true”. The desire for continuous learning, high performance to promote the progress of the nation and the appreciation of the consequent rivalry was present in the code “Korean people are industrious ants”. I could capture the ideals of strengthening cohesion and relegating the individual into the background appeared in the main code “Even a sheet of paper is lighter when two people lift it”. Rules to avoid uncertain situations and adherence to pre-determined systems as typical values in South Korean culture in the code “Even if you know the way, ask one more time”. Competition, a prominent feature of Korean culture, is motivated by the wish to obtain a higher position in social ranking. Consequently, the main code labelled “Good clothes are like growing wings”, expressing the significance of appearance as a value is attributable to fear from the loss or weakening of one’s actual position. The code “Shame will accompany you through life” indicates reactions triggered by fear from losing your social position.

According to sociologist Kim (2000), the main values of Koreans include the following:

- ✓ Harmonious family life.
- ✓ Obedience, humility of women, rejection of sex before marriage for women.
- ✓ Respect for ancestors, preservation of the family bloodline, having male offspring and pride in the family name.
- ✓ Education, upbringing of children.
- ✓ Nurturing personal relationships (social halo).
- ✓ Collectivism, identification of individualist with egoist conduct.
- ✓ Strong patriotism.
- ✓ Performance-orientation, personal progress in the service of the community.
- ✓ Appreciation of delicious food.
- ✓ Enjoyment of leisure activities.
- ✓ Humour.
- ✓ Respect of aesthetics, of the beauty of nature.

The research confirmed the identified values and can explain the mechanisms shaping and driving culture.

The third goal of the research was to find out what the interviewees had learned from their South Korean interactions in their interpretation based on thinking over these interactions, and how their experience of South Korean culture altered their interpretation framework. According to the experience of the research, the participants of Hungarian culture re-valued the expression of respect to the old, whether members of Korean or Hungarian culture. They had a more intensive experience of the feeling of belonging to a group and would not like to risk that any more. They are not willing to represent their opinion and refrain from expressing their opinion individually. They are willing to strengthen their position achieved in South Korean culture with lots of work, and they avoid losing their face, shame.

The fourth question of the research pertained to how the identified cultural differences could be used in organizational life in practice, in particular how they could improve more efficient cooperation between employees from the two cultures. The results obtained in answer to this research question are discussed in more detail under Section 3.5.2.

3.5 HOW DOES THE RESEARCH FIT INTO THE RELEVANT THEORY AND PRACTICE

The present research has produced added value for both theory and practice. The theoretical results fill a gap: previously, no data had been available on the discrepancies of South Korean and Hungarian culture as seen by Hungarians. The development and management system of South Korean economy has been analysed comprehensively by only two authors in Hungary (Mayer, 1994, Marosi, 1995). Cultural research findings concerning the discrepancies of the two cultures have originated from the results of the models including the dimension of culture presented in the theoretical part. In what follows, I will compare their results with those of the research conducted in the framework of the thesis. This comparison prepares also the next chapter presenting how such knowledge can be used in organisational life. That is, the research conducted for the thesis has enriched the technical literature on these two cultures by new theoretical findings.

3.5.1 Comparison of the research findings with those of culture-dimensional researches

Comparison with etic and emic researches cannot be full-scale since the differences in methodology and approach make it impossible to match main codes with dimensions. However, the results of previous etic research may confirm the rationale of the main codes obtained in this research.

Comparing the research results with those published by Hofstede and the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) researches, the power distance index of South Korea is high (at 60 and 5.61), indicative of a hierarchical social structure. Hungary has low (46) and medium (5.56) values in the same dimension, meaning that power distances are significantly bigger in Korean than in Hungarian culture. Both these results and my research confirmed that members f Hungarian culture must prepare themselves for the hierarchical relationships prevailing in Korean culture.

Research dimensions of Hofstede	South Korea	Hungary
Power distance	60	46
Individualism	18	80
Masculinity	39	88
Uncertainty avoidance	85	82
Long-term orientation	75	58
Indulgence	29	31

Table 10 Comparison of South Korean and Hungarian data based on Hofstede's cultural research (Hofstede, 2008)

Korean culture shows a low value of 18 in the dimension of individualism/collectivism, meaning a highly collectivistic society. In collectivist cultures, individuals are committed to group membership. The sample of Hungarian culture (value: 11) also indicates a collectivist culture. The interviewees indicated a more marked difference in this dimension than the dimensions of Hofstede. In the GLOBE dimensions, the value of group collectivism measured in Hungary approximates the Korean one (5.54 and 5.25, respectively), but in terms of institutional collectivism, it falls short of the South Korean value (5.2 and 3.56, respectively). The research has confirmed that the respondent Hungarians experienced differences not only at the level of group collectivism, but also that of institutional collectivism. Hungarian interviewees found the institutional norms and practices such as mandatory organisational events to strengthen collective existence quite exacting.

According to Hofstede's values, South Korean culture is definitely masculine. Based on Varga's values, Hungary is deemed a feminine culture with its value of 17. The GLOBE values also project marked difference in the dimension of gender equality. South Korea produced a low (2.5) and Hungary a medium (4.08) value. That is, in South Korea, gender differences are not minimised, whereas in Hungarian culture it is more typical to promote gender equality. My research confirmed that Hungarian interviewees considered South Korean culture highly masculine due to its competitive aspect.

In the uncertainty avoidance dimension of Hofstede, South Korean culture has one of the highest values, 85, indicative of rules and strong compliance with the rules. The Hungarian value of 83 is also high, so Hungarian culture also belongs to those avoiding uncertainly. The GLOBE dimension data indicate a wider gap (values of 3.55 and 3.12,

respectively), but the present research suggested an even wider one. The interviewees were annoyed by the Koreans' excessive compliance with the rules and adaptation to the norms.

The long-term orientation index is very high indeed in Korean culture (78) due to the Confucian values and the traditions. In business life, too, they prefer certain growth to fast profit. Hungarians are more practical (value: 58): they consider fast response to the circumstances more important than insistence on the traditions. The data of the GLOBE research indicate less difference already in the future-orientation dimension (3.97 and 3.21, resp.). The interviewees definitely confirmed that.

Members of Korean culture are constrained in their behaviour by the social norms, as shown by the figure of 29 in the dimension of Indulgence. Hungary also has a low value, of 31. Hungarian interviewees reported more difference in normative behaviour.

Considering the achievement-orientation dimension of the GLOBE research, Koreans produced higher real values, that is, they estimate performance and success higher than their Hungarian peers (4.55 and 3.43, respectively). This has been confirmed by the research. South Korea and Hungary are both characterised by relatively high assertiveness (4.7 and 4.79, respectively). These two values are confirmed by the research results. The real value of human orientation is medium in both cultures (3.81 and 3.35, resp.), and Korean culture actually encourages and rewards justice, fairness, unselfishness, generosity shown to other members of society more intensively. Interestingly, the Korea corruption index suggests a different picture, so it is probably the collectivist dimension that makes this value so strong here.

Dimensions of the GLOBE research	South Korea		Hungary	
	As is	Rank order	As is	Rank order
Assertiveness	4.4	18	4.79	3
Future orientation	3.97	23	3.21	58
Human orientation	3.81	44	3.35	58
Group collectivism	5.54	23	5.25	37
Power distance	5.61	7	5.56	12
Institutional collectivism	5.2	2	3.53	60
Uncertainty avoidance	3.55	54	3.12	60
Gender equality	2.5	61	4.08	1
Achievement orientation	4.55	9	3.43	58

Table 11 Comparison of South Korean and Hungarian data based on the data of the GLOBE research (Hofstede et al., 2004)

3.5.2 Adaptability of the research in organizational life

The values of Korean national culture are present also in Korean organisational life. Steers-Shin-Ungson (1989) studied Korean organisations and identified seven features defining the work environment. (1) Korean work ethic, (2) group harmony and social relations, (3) career bases, (4) hierarchical relationships, (5) importance of personal relationships, (6) decision-making mechanism and (7) the role of women at the workplace. The thesis research has revealed the drivers underlying the typical features of highly collectivist Korean organisational culture characterised by great power distance and by masculine properties, for the sake of contributing to the more efficient cooperation of organisational actors.

The research shed light on that Korean managers and employees are ready to keep a large power distance, so Hungarian managers and employees must expect this phenomenon. It is not rare that employees are instructed to do something without any special explanation, and the manager provides no assistance for execution. It is commendable for employees to work pro-actively and creatively. Korean leaders avoid conflicts and do not involve employees in decision-making. Consequently. Hungarian employees will have limited options to express their opinion at a Korean organisation. Managers avoid losing their face, i.e. potential damage to their prestige, so in such situations they may resist loudly and intensively. Korean organisations resemble a big family where the employee is expected to be loyal and the leader as the father figure

protects them and gives them instructions. Thus it is commendable for Hungarian employees to be open culturally and to develop strong commitment for the organisation.

The Korean organisation respects its tested and trusted staff. Consequently, the Korean organisation supports employees with long-term commitment.

After revision, the research findings will be suitable to serve as the theoretical basis for an inter-cultural training program. That training would strive to introduce the participants to the cultural discrepancies, to differences in behaviour attributable to the cultural relations that are typical of the destination country. This type of training may provide considerable help to develop the cultural sensitivity of expatriates (Harzing – Ruysseveldt, 1995).

3.5.3 Defining directions to move forward and for future research

There are several options for progress inherent in this research. The new findings concerning the disparities of Hungarian and South Korean culture mapped by the research make it possible to formulate such problem areas of cultural research and such research questions as could be tested on a larger sample, by other research methods or under different research paradigms.

It would be commendable to review the limits considering the ideas expressed under the section “Limitations of the research” and to conduct further investigations along the factors concerned to refine generalisability.

It might be worth investigating the emotional aspects of the narratives of the interviewees. How they try to process their everyday experiences in a new culture and what coping strategies they apply.

It could be an interesting and unique research to compare the South Korean data obtained here with those of a potential North Korean cultural research.

4 SUMMARY

The summary part of my thesis recaptures the theoretical thrust of the thesis, the theory, the methodological issue, my researcher decisions to interpret the empirical research and also the results of the research.

International (economic) activity has been spreading across cultures and borders. Getting in touch with members of other cultures online or personally has become part of everyday life as people work to achieve their personal or corporate goals. Differences in approach and value hierarchy and also conflicts and communication problems may be encountered when members of two cultures meet. We know from the research of Azevedo (2011) that however smoothly the members of two very different cultures cooperate, the individuals concerned will always be affected by such encounters.

Studying the literature and the empirical aspects of the discrepancies of Hungarian and South Korean culture is a topical research goal, and the relevant research findings will fill a gap. The development and management system of South Korean economy has been analysed comprehensively by only two authors in Hungary (Mayer, 1994, Marosi, 1995). The relevant technical literature mostly contrasts Korean culture with that of Western Europe; the (defective) Korean/Hungarian data are missing.

The thesis is divided into four parts. Chapter 1, the Introduction presents the relevance and purpose of the research. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the theories in the relevant literature promoting the better understanding of the empirical part of the thesis. It details the concept of Culture and the Meeting of cultures. The Culture section presents definitions, elements, layers and potential interpretations of culture, and the main cultural research (value-based, action-based) theories. The section on the Meeting of cultures is divided into two main parts. Difficulties of integration into a foreign culture is about inter-cultural communication, the factors hindering integration, and the phenomena of stress and cultural shock occurring under such circumstances. Factors promoting integration into an alien culture presents the literature of factors promoting the meeting of two cultures.

The third part of the thesis (Empirical research) presents my empirical research, divided into three phases: research planning, data collection and preliminary data analysis and distillation of the results & research results, respectively.

The research planning phase presents my researcher position, that is, the epistemological stance I chose for the research and the research (sub-)questions. It also includes the presentation of possible distortions in the research. In the data collection and preliminary data analysis stage, I present first the data collection process. I introduce the background of its methodology and my choice of the method of data analysis. This is followed by the description of the identification of the observation units together with the sampling method then, after the presentation of the basic data of the sample under study,

the methodology of data collection and recording data is described in detail. Finally, the preliminary data analysis is detailed and I sum up my ideas concerning the validity of the research.

The section on the end results includes the final data analysis, the end results and the conclusions, and the summary of the identified cultural disparities.

The section on how the research fits into the relevant theory and practice presents the findings of previous cultural researches, comparing them to the new ones. Adaptability of the research in the life of the organisation provides a detailed overview of the possible application in practice of the research.

In order to interpret the discrepancies arising when representatives of Hungarian and Korean culture meet, it was imperative to study first the framework setting of "interpretations of culture". I assumed that "Culture is the complex of those transmitted value patterns, notions and other symbol systems which affect the behaviour" (Kluckhohn, 1951) and that culture can be observed through patterns of behaviour considered self-evident by its members. Such behaviour patterns become clearly visible when an outsider driven by different cultural norms enters the cultural community (Hall, 1960). Culture is thus "... a general phenomenon. Everybody lives in a specific culture and develops that further. Culture is a universal orientation system characteristic of a society, organization or group which was created by such specific symbols that are very typical of the society, group or organization and are bequeathed from generation to generation..." (Thomas, 1996, 2005). For persons socialized in the same culture, cultural characteristics are quite natural and ordinary, but if two individuals from two different cultures interact, the encounter of their different orientation systems due to their different cultures may lead to the manifestation/emergence of differences (Thomas, 2005 cited by Topcu, 2005). According to the interpretation of Allaire and Firsirotu (1984), culture is part of the social system and manifests itself in human behaviour, way of life and the products of that behaviour. That is, in their view, culture is to be investigated at a specific place and time, and they look for basic assumptions and beliefs manifesting themselves in the specifics of culture that influence its representatives subconsciously (Schein, 1985). In my interpretation based on Allarie and Firsirotu (1984), culture is a static phenomenon that is present in its members roughly unchanged in time. Cultural research applying the static approach typically defines a certain culture by the frontiers delimiting the corresponding national culture; therefore, the scope of my research will be defined by the borders of South Korea.

Technical literature on integration into a foreign culture typically considers it crucial that employees in a foreign environment possess traits and competencies that help them integrate into the new environment and consequently guarantee their efficiency (also) there. Fülöp and Sebestyén (2011) collected what obstacles and challenges individuals residing in a foreign culture in the long term must face: (1) general overload due to the changes they experience, i.e. everything is changing at once, giving you the impression of your legs being cut from under you (Hess-Linderman, 2002); (2) language and communication difficulties (Ward-Kennedy, 1996); (3)unknown customs and norms (Church, 1982); (4) possible financial difficulties (Opper et al., 1990); (5) perceived and actual racial discrimination (Church, 1982); (6) different climate (McLachlan-Justice, 2009). In his study of expatriate workers, Tung (1987) identified seven potential causes of failure: (1) expatriate's inability to adapt to the new environment (because of the geographic, climatic, cultural differences); (2) his personality or the emotional immaturity, (3) inability to cope with responsibilities posed by the new job; (4) lack of technical competence; (5) lack of motivation; (6) inability of spouse to adjust to the new environment, or (7) other family-related problems. According to Black and Gregersen (1999), failure is seldom due to lack of knowledge and skills; psychological factors such as inability to handle stressful situation, to communicate with people coming from a different culture or the low ability of the family to adapt to a new environment are more likely causes. In his researches analyzing the key factors of success of expatriate staff, Flynn (1995) came up with three decisive factors: (1) intercultural adjustment skills; (2) professional, technical and managerial capabilities, skills, and (3) stability and adjustment capacity of the family.

Differences in the theories of understanding/knowing cultures reveal marked diversity already in the definition of the topics of the relevant research. Cultural researches differ not only in the questions they ask, but also in their research goal and methods. Research in terms of paradigms is the most widespread organisation theory framework. Its basis is provided by the concept of the paradigm as defined by Kuhn (1970, 1984, 2002), i.e. a general approach and typical theoretical framework reflecting fundamental beliefs and convictions about the essence of organizational reality (ontology), the nature of organizational knowledge (epistemology), human nature and the feasibility of studying these phenomena (methodology) (Gelei, 2002). Researches aiming at understanding cultures thus think in different paradigms and, consequently, researchers may ask different research questions and answer them by different research

methodologies. Critical management theories (Clegg, 2005, Reed, 2009, Scherer, 2009, Thompson – O'Doherty, 2009) are similar in that they express social criticism, profess the principle of denaturalisation, and they are against the principle of performance, and include reflexivity and power as central topics (Hidegh – Gelei – Primecz, 2014, Hidegh, 2015). I chose critical realism relying on the theoretical bases of social philosophy and occupying an interim position between the paradigm-based constructivist and positivist traditions (Hidegh – Gelei – Primecz, 2014) as my theoretical framework. Critical realism focuses on the exploration of the latent causal relations, the hidden, non-observable mechanisms that drive the world. That is, the ontological objectivism of critical realism assumes that there are hidden underlying structures and relationships with causal power and a potential for shaping the phenomena on the surface (Reed, 2009 idézi Hidegh, 2015). The physical and the social world are thus understandable and finding the relevant knowledge is the mission of the researchers (Primecz, 1999). The position of critical realism is that, contrary to the positivist paradigm, research findings are inevitably influenced by the subjectivity of the researcher which, in turn, produces many different versions of the social reality that exists independent of the researcher (Reed, 2009 quoted by Hidegh, 2015). Critical realists therefore assume that the subject matter of the research acts independent of the researcher; the structures of social reality are objectively given and affect his identity and behaviour, but social-economic systems are being created in a social (collective) construction process (Duberley – Johnson, 2009 quoted by Hidegh, 2015). In the absence of knowledge concerning the driving forces located deep down, observations might be misleading; therefore, research should focus on understanding the driving forces.

The goal of the present research is to answer the predefined research questions raised by the researcher. I assigned research question promoting analysis to each research area. The questions are mappings of the research goals (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Research questions can be answered with the help of conclusions based on data obtained from the research interviews (Krippendorff, 2003). A qualitative, exploratory method is applied to identify and explain cross-cultural discrepancies. The general goal of the research is to examine processes triggered by the encounter of Hungarian and South Korean culture. To explore the differences, presumably of cultural origin, in the thinking and interpretation patterns of members of Hungarian culture, based on their actual interaction with members of South Korean culture. Research is conducted at the level of the individual, so it examines reality as perceived locally, but the level of the conclusions

is distanced from that of the individual. The present research applies an emic approach; it strives to explain the general by using local concepts, so it formulates conclusions at the national level (for Hungarian and South-Korean culture, respectively), because it accepts the fact that members of a national culture always relate their interpretations to their own national (cultural) categories (Chevrier, 2009). It aims to explore and explain cultural discrepancies manifesting themselves through actions of members of South Korean culture from a Hungarian perspective, in order to enhance the efficiency of cooperation between these two cultures.

The research questions and research goals identify the prospective observation units representing the basis for sampling in the research. The identification of the observation units is the process where the analytical units, the cases, are defined (Krippendorff, 1989). The research covers members of Hungarian culture (i.e. persons born and raised in Hungary) in daily contact with members of South Korean culture. Daily contact (at the workplace organisation, university) and a defined minimum spell of the contacts were considered indispensible conditions to ensure that Hungarians involved in the research have more-than-superficial knowledge of South Korean culture. So it was a precondition to have expatriate interviewees living and working in the researched culture, with opportunities for personal contacts with the members of the local culture (Romani et al. 2004). The bottom limit of the time constraint was set based on the cultural alignment model (Oberg, 1960). In addition to setting up timeframes, sampling was to be limited also geographically. The sample included persons having their habitual residence in the foreign culture and persons living in their own culture, but working with representatives of the foreign culture on a permanent basis (Topcu, 2005).The interviews were conducted between the 31st March and 17th December, 2015; in 10 cases via Skype and in 8 cases personally. The sample included 13 women and 5 men; 9 people lived in Korea, and 9 in Hungary at the time of the interview. I assumed that interviewees in different life situations probably got acquainted with South Korean culture in different situations, so the research material would be enriched by asking about the experiences of interviewees with heterogeneous characteristics. Sampling produced audio recordings of around 16 hours and some 350 pages of interview transcripts.

I chose content analysis examining the narratives of the interviewees by quantitative analyses as the method of my research. Qualitative content analysis applies a systematic coding system to analyse the content of text data, and makes it possible to identify the topics in the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005 cited by Kovács, 2017). The coding

system makes it possible for the researcher to arrange the data into an analyzable system (Krippendorff, 1989). In the present research, codes were assigned primarily to paragraphs and secondarily to sentences. The Nvivo software assisting qualitative research was of great help to me during coding. The software supports data coding, the interpretation of information gathered, the identification and assessment of theories and the visual representation of results. The key phase of qualitative content analysis is the drawing of conclusions regarding the relationship between the established codes and the phenomenon under study (Krippendorf, 1989). The purpose of observing the phenomena concerned was to understand the deep structure, that is, the mechanisms governing the level of reality, that is, to find out what types of disparities (allegedly of cultural origin) were experienced by the Hungarian interviewees during their interactions with South Koreans, how they interpreted them and what factors and values they attributed them to. The argumentation relies on metaphors; on metaphors known to the audience (readers) already (Peters, 1997 quoted by Primecz, 1999); therefore, I assigned a Korean saying to each of the main codes I identified during the analysis, to make them clearer. Several sub-codes are legible under each of the identified seven collective main codes. I enriched the analysis with interview excerpts.

- ✓ One tiger by family, and you will have order.
- ✓ Korean people are industrious ants.
- ✓ Whatever the boss says is true.
- ✓ Even a sheet of paper is lighter when two people lift it.
- ✓ Shame will accompany you through life.
- ✓ Even if you know the way, ask one more time.
- ✓ Good clothes are like growing wings.

The present research has produced added value for both theory and practice. The theoretical results fill a gap: previously, no data had been available on the discrepancies of South Korean and Hungarian culture as seen by Hungarians. In the relevant literature, information on these two cultures used to originate from the results of models including a cultural dimension, with some research results on the specifics of Korean or Hungarian culture. The goal of the research was to explore and understand how the cultural discrepancies experienced by the interviewees in interactive situations were interpreted by them and what factors and values they attributed them to. This research will hopefully provide us a deeper understanding of the discrepancies of these two cultures, as seen by Hungarians. That is, the research conducted for the thesis has enriched the technical literature on these two cultures by new theoretical findings.

The values of Korean national culture are present also in Korean organisational life. Steers-Shin-Ungson (1989) studied Korean organisations and identified seven features defining the work environment. (1) Korean work ethic, (2) group harmony and social relations, (3) career bases, (4) hierarchical relationships, (5) importance of personal relationships, (6) decision-making mechanism and (7) the role of women at the workplace. The thesis research has revealed the drivers underlying the typical features of highly collectivist Korean organisational culture characterised by great power distance and by masculine properties, for the sake of contributing to the more efficient cooperation of organisational actors. After revision, the research findings will be suitable to serve as the theoretical basis for an inter-cultural training program. That training would strive to introduce the participants to the cultural discrepancies, to differences in behaviour attributable to the cultural relations that are typical of the destination country. This type of training may provide considerable help to develop the cultural sensitivity of expatriates (Harzing – Ruysseveldt, 1995).

The present research has produced added value for both theory and practice. That is, the research conducted for the thesis enriched the technical literature on, and also organisational life in practice in these two cultures by new theoretical findings.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Interview outline used for sampling

1. Introduction: age, position, marital status, qualification(s), foreign language skills, current life situation, residence, workplace)
2. What positive/negative/strange experience/memory can you recall from your encounter with the South Korean culture?
3. Tell me three words which best describe South Korean culture to you!
4. Which characteristics could Hungarian culture adapt from the South Korean one?
5. Experience associated with the South Korean organisation
6. Can a Hungarian employee be successful in the South Korean organizational environment?
7. In which culture do you plan to live your life in the future?

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